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Studies in theology







*Studies in Theology.—II*

THEISM



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COSMIC THEISM; OR, THE THEISM  
OF NATURE

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BY

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# CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS.....	5
ANTITHEISTIC THEORIES.....	28
AGNOSTICISM.....	28
PANTHEISM.....	34
POLYTHEISM.....	50
ATHEISM.....	52
IMPLICATES OF THE THEORY.....	106
THEISTIC THEORY.....	110
POSTULATES OF THEISM.....	115
DEFINITIONS OF GOD.....	118
ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF GOD.....	123
EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.....	160
DOCTRINE OF CAUSE.....	167
FIRST CAUSE.....	171
EXAMINATION OF MILL'S ARGUMENT ON FIRST CAUSE.....	192
SOME DEFINITIONS.....	226
IMPLICATIONS OF THEISM.....	246
FINAL PROOFS OF DIVINE EXISTENCE.....	250
COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.....	252
TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.....	359
THE MORAL ARGUMENT.....	372
ARGUMENT FROM UNIVERSAL BELIEF.....	380
ARGUMENT FROM INFLUENCE OF THEORIES.....	393
SUMMING UP OF THE ARGUMENT.....	431
APPENDIX.....	445



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE philosophico-theological discussions conducted, some years since, by Sir William Hamilton, Dean Mansel, Herbert Spencer, and others, while not primarily designed to be in the interests of atheism, and most of them indeed avowedly theistic in their general trend and purpose, have nevertheless unquestionably brought the fundamental question of the existence of God, or at least the possibility of rationally affirming his existence, anew into the field of controversy. Principles avowed and theories advanced touching the laws and limitations of the knowable have inaugurated a new age of doubt, and called out a line of discussions, under what is ostentatiously styled the scientific method, which have not a little unsettled faith. The result is a period quite epochal for the production of works of distinguished ability on all the leading aspects of the subject. In the main, the disputed points have been handled with admirable temper and learning, worthy of the age of ages for philosophical thought.

Meantime the unprecedented advance of science along all lines during the same period has brought into view a number of hitherto unknown facts and laws which have been industriously employed to the same end, of doubt and unsettlement of faith. This is especially true of the theories of evolution and biology, enunciated anew by Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, and others distinguished as leaders of investigation and as masters in these departments. Much of the material for thought in these particular lines is new, former ages having had no knowledge

2



whatever of them. That fresh and modifying factors come thus into the field, demanding patient and careful consideration, cannot be questioned. It is not surprising that these matters have filled and do yet fill a large scope in the awakened thought of the age. We cannot doubt that the recent discoveries and advances in scientific researches in these and other departments, and the arguments elicited, do and will more and more conserve the venerable foundations. However disturbed temporarily, faith has suffered no defeat or permanent harm.

The present volume, it is hoped, may be of service to some minds during the process of reconstruction now going forward, in staying them against unreasonable doubts, and in fortifying them against the persistent assaults of skepticism, and also in helping them to conclusions which will defy criticism.

Atheism is an ancient and epochal disease of the human mind; perhaps it might rather be said to be perennial. It springs forth spontaneously whenever there is any new development in the advancing knowledge of humanity. Every new discovery, or speculation merely, which disturbs established ways of thinking, may seed acres of mind with atheistic thought. There are always multitudes in condition to be inoculated with the disease, and it is sure to break forth with violence. It is safe to say that its perennial root is the always-existing fact of ignorance and sensuality, and prevalent misconceptions of the character of God as the legitimate consequence.

Plato, reasoning against the atheism of his time, developed the fact that the then current atheism was rather a revolt against the gods, or vain superstitions of the age. The atheism of the renaissance, which threatened for a time to eradicate all religion from the world, was at first a mere protest against abuses of the idea of God intolerable to awakened reason. It carried over into absolute atheism, and drew forth those

wonderful treatises which finally cleared the mental atmosphere, and won a permanent victory for theism which abides to this time.

The atheism of to-day differs in some respects from all preceding attacks of the disease. It is now not so much a revolt against idolatries or vain superstitions as it is a resistance of the idea of a personal Cause at the head of the universe. It is a vain attempt to construct the universe without God; a revolt against the entire idea of the personal God; an affirmation of a universe without God.

The atmosphere in which we live is one of doubt of all human conclusions. Uncertainty is projected over the whole realm of thought. The mind is driven in upon itself for the revision of all its supposed knowledges and beliefs. I hardly know of a sadder refrain in all literature than the words of Professor Clifford: "We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven upon a soulless earth, and we have felt with utter loneliness that the great Companion was dead." Sad indeed is the lot of any mind, much more of a cultured and thoughtful mind, when it is ready to confess to itself that there is no God, and that man is a soulless clod—the heaven empty and the earth orphaned. The relief is, that the dirge is but the funereal moan of a disordered mind—the wail of one who fancies himself bereaved and the race fatherless. The earth and sky are draped only to his imagination. In fact, the sun still shines; "the great Companion" still lives; the heavens still resound with the shouts of rejoicing myriads, and the great Father still sits upon the throne of the universe as serenely as if no atheist had ever assaulted his majesty or called in question his being. No, the great Companion is not dead—the heaven is not empty.

The impression that is so assiduously sought to be made, that new facts and scientific conclusions bear heavily against theism,



is wholly groundless. No such facts or conclusions exist. On the other hand, nothing is more certain than that all discoveries in science, and all enlargements of knowledge which have accrued during the remarkable time in which we live, have in the outcome only added to the theistic argument; all progress works to its advantage. The old discussions have lost nothing of their force or pertinence, and the changed conditions have brought only new and important helps into the field.

The old arguments are perennial, and being true will never become obsolete. They have not been answered—they never can be answered. They are among the things that cannot be shaken, and therefore among the things that must remain, and as much as ever still deserve to be read and studied and reiterated. Modern facts and methods change the form of the argument, and introduce new elements of proof, without vacating any thing of its essence. Some accidents have been surrendered, and may be, but not an atom of the essential contents of the argument advanced by Christian theists from the beginning has been taken from them. There is especial reason for the permanent use of the older books in this great controversy, over and above their intrinsic worthiness and unanswerable force, while there is conceded necessity for fresh treatises. The especial reason is, that the current phases of the discussion are occupied mainly about recent facts and their supposed bearings, and the old fundamental arguments, which are and must forever be paramount, are left in abeyance, as if they were no more accounted valid. Any new putting is not a demand growing out of any discovered weakness, but is solely put forth on the ground that new facts are to be dealt with.

Among the works bearing directly or indirectly on the subject are the recent works in science, especially cosmological and biological treatises and researches, and several excellent works on the special subject itself, among which Professor

Bowne's two volumes are worthy of the first place. At the end of this volume will be found a list of valuable treatises on the subject, and other works of greater or less value, pro and con, referred to in this discussion.

As the question of the existence of a personal God must always remain the most fundamental question possible to human thought, and as its affirmative answer is absolutely essential to the very existence of religion, and therefore as the whole moral welfare of the world depends on the maintenance of the doctrine, the Christian Church, the divinely-appointed guardian and holder of the sacred trust, must continue to guard the point with unremitting vigilance. It becomes a duty to give enlightened attention to every new scientific deliverance having bearings, or even assumed to have bearings, on the question. Nothing must be left to assumption. No point should be neglected. There must be no evasion, no sophistical reasonings, no appeals to or dependence on passion or prejudice, no mere pertinacity or dogmatism. The largest freedom must be tolerated—even encouraged. The thorough conviction of the truth on this point alone will furnish stable foundations, and such conviction can only be secured by a full and fair consideration of all matters alleged to affect the conclusion; and so long as the argument is maintained in its present strength no assault can imperil the great religious interests of the world. The existence and holy character of a personal God maintained, there can be no possible overthrow or ultimate destruction of faith.

Hailing all lights that come to us from all quarters, and the most rigorous scrutiny into the question from whatever source, we commend to theologians the severest methods in the examination both of premises and conclusions, as well as the earnest defense of the faith.

In periods of doubt and virulent assaults against faith, it is



of service to remember that paroxysms however violent soon run their course. They cover the sky with clouds for awhile and threaten to overwhelm all, but they do not obliterate the sun. Truth cannot die. Obscured for a moment, and often proclaimed overthrown, its assailants after a brief enthusiasm pass like shadows over the rock, and it emerges from the temporary cloud with increased brightness, unimpaired as the rock over which the fleeting shadow passes. The past is strewn thick with the debris of blatant theories of doubt and error. Through all and above all God sits in the heavens and suffers no disquietude. No assault reaches him or ever can.

It is marvelous how short-lived error is. It comes to us flushed and with sound of trumpets. It often looks robust and mighty, and seems to have come to stay, but, like the Arab, after a single night, it folds its tent and steals away. We look for it and it is gone. So it has been; so it will be.

Truth wins its victories and abides for ever. So this first, greatest, and eternal truth will not be taken from us, but will grow in brightness and beauty and power to bless the everlasting ages. The Maker of the universe has not left himself without a witness. His name is engraven on every atom of the stupendous structure his almighty power has built.

That we have passed the extreme of the reaction there is no room to doubt, and that the assault has expended its greatest fury is equally certain; and that the defense has been successful cannot be disputed. There has been no lack of ability to the storming column, and the outcome is significant. It will require a time for the atmosphere to clear, and we shall still hear stray shots from stragglers who have not heard of the conclusion of the battle. It will be a generation before points cease to be claimed which have been determined against or declared to be unsupported. A little on we shall hear of things, now declared to be established, as obsolete theories and aban-

doned speculations stored away in the museum of tentative speculations. Truth is winning its ground and clearing its positions in such manner that possible assault will become exhausted. The process is tedious, but it is impossible to evade it. There will never arise an opportunity to suggest doubt or put forth denial that will not be eagerly put forward. The final victories of truth must be achieved in detail by a series of overthrows of error, until the last possible outpost, and the citadel itself, is carried.

The copious extracts found in the body of the text were intended to appear as foot-notes or appendixes; but were finally placed as found for the convenience of the reader. They are from the ablest writers, and given in full, rather than sense merely, that no injustice might be done to the learned authors, and that the full benefit of their reasonings might be enjoyed.

Extended extracts are made from some of the author's former writings, and, as in the case of excerpts from other authors, are referred to their source and credited with quotation points.

The extended quotation from John Stuart Mill is presented that the reader might see his entire argument in his own lucid style and in its full force. It is at once the most succinct and trenchant argument ever made against the popular and philosophic (as well) doctrine of cause; and furnishes the reader the essence of all that can be said on the subject, from his standpoint, in the clearest and most condensed form. His failure to make good the denial of a first cause other than matter and inhering force is fatal to the hypothesis, since it is impossible to improve the statement or add to its argumentative power.

The quotation from Theodore Parker is given at length, both for its beauty and force, in Mr. Parker's peculiar style, and that the reader might have the advantage of a statement

from one of the freest and ablest minds of the recent age who is not in general harmony with conservative orthodox thinking, and who by many has been severely criticised as almost an atheist.

As the eye scans the pages, quotation points seem too numerous, and possibly clearness would have been conserved had the original purpose been carried out, and the interlarded matter appeared in the appendix ; but the reader can remedy the evil, if it be one, by omitting such readings as he may choose, or by referring to the works themselves, which might be better.

We have not omitted any objection to the theistic theory from any source knowingly, and it will be for the reader to judge of the conclusiveness of the argument, and of the adequacy of the answer to counter arguments and objections. The issue is the greatest possible. It is of the greatest moment that it should be met in a candid spirit.

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# STUDIES IN THEOLOGY.

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## THEISM.

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### SOME PRELIMINARIES.

IT is a rule from which we never depart, in the following pages, to make no reference to vulgar or ignorant expressions of doubt; or, to mention the names or opinions of vulgar, vaunting exponents of dissent. The reason for the first omission is, that ignorant disbelief or belief Blatant unbelief not worthy of notice. has no significance for thought. It is not the offspring of reflection and admits of no help from reason. The “sufficient reason” for it has no meaning. The reason for the second omission is, that blatant disbelievers covet notoriety and do not profit by instruction, or even propose to themselves serious investigation in order to the attainment of truth. If ignorance is, as has been truthfully aphorized, the mother of superstition, ignorance and vice together father and mother unreasoned dissent and vulgar doubt.

We constantly recognize that there are intelligent and fair-minded earnest doubters whose dissent is offspring neither of vice nor ignorance, nor yet of rashness nor indifference, but of honest difficulties in the way of belief. Honest doubters are entitled to respect.

For such doubt we have profound respect; and as far as possible it is our effort always to find precisely what the real point of the difficulty is, and give it a fair and candid examination. There are real difficulties.

It was a saying of Sir Humphry Davy, "I envy no quality of mind or intellect in others, be it genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and, I believe, most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing. For it makes a discipline of goodness, creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish, throws over the decay and destruction of existence the most gorgeous of all lights, awakens life in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity."

"There can be no question, I think, that the foundations of Christian belief have been, during the last half of the nineteenth century, very rudely shaken and disturbed. No one who either reads or thinks, or who observes carefully what is going on around him, can well avoid this conclusion. For not only in private intercourse with each other do men of culture and education acknowledge their difficulties, but so much is unbelief in the air, that even vulgar irreligion has felt encouraged to be jubilant and noisy. Public caricatures of sacred things have been attempted, and one may hear in many debating societies blasphemies openly vented, which can only proceed upon the confident presumption that in the eternal conflict between reason and faith, faith is at present undergoing a series of defeats, and that Christianity is entangled with such legacies of unreason from the past that the intractable knot admits of no easy solution, but must be violently cut. . . . It is high time, therefore, that Christendom aroused itself to grapple boldly with an unsolved problem which is working such mischievous results; and that the question were honestly asked and fairly answered, What are the main obstacles which debar our own generation from the happiness of tranquil Christian belief." \*

The state of the world-mind at present is one of extreme

\* Curteis's "Scientific Obstacles to Christian Belief," pp. 3, 4.



unrest. To whatever cause it is to be attributed the fact cannot be disputed. It is not simply the unrest of healthful activity: that were no occasion of distress. It is the deeper World-mind at unrest. disquietude of doubt, of uncertainty, verging on despair; and if not despair, desperation. The press teems with tokens of the prevailing chaos. The pulpit and lecture rostrum are vocal with the common disquiet. There is dismay, panic, in many most thoughtful and least excitable minds. Out of a multitude of proofs of this general condition of unrest I select a few:

“It may be said that five great powers are now at work in the construction of modern society—the humanitarian, the scientific, the speculative, the ritualistic, and the evangelical. The humanitarian comprehends both the democratic and social tendencies, asserting that the true progress of man lies only in the line of the development and adjustment of his earthly relations; the scientific has for its great aim the subjugation of nature, first to the thought, and then to the use of man, tending perpetually to bring what is above nature—the supernatural—under the dominion of human thought, and so uniting with the speculative, which strives to render a purely rational account of man’s nature and destiny; ritualism, within the sphere of Christianity, insists upon the external organization and rites; while evangelism is instinct with the power of the Christian system.

“Three of these form a natural alliance with each other; namely, the social, the scientific, and the speculative tendencies. They have, if not a natural, yet at present a real tendency toward the pantheistic scheme; they are aiming, more or less consciously, at the realization of a social state in which man’s natural rights shall be conceded, the subjugation of nature made complete, and the supremacy of speculation as the highest good for man forever established.

“Amid these contesting forces Christian theology has come  
Theology not always fitly represented. to be represented by many as but a subordinate  
 pursuit for inferior minds, as something which  
 neither meets the intellect nor the heart of the present age.” \*

“Many have lost their early faith in the Bible, and are following its guidance with faltering footstep. Between them and hitherto accepted truths the sciences have been placing apparently insurmountable obstacles. The trustful simplicity with which they once read the sacred record has almost perished. Inferences by the man of science, conflicting with interpretations of Scripture by the theologian, have rudely shaken their most cherished convictions. They are not infidels, they are not skeptics, for doubt is distasteful to them; they long for more definite expositions and a firmer faith.” †

“It is one of the most singular circumstances at this period of great intellectual proficiency that the important question of the existence of a supreme Intelligence on natural principles is apparently not yet decided. Notwithstanding the many abstruse works that have been written to prove the Being of God, and the vast mass of recently discovered facts by which such argument is sustained, many of the most acute reasoners on the continent profess atheistic, or, what is virtually the same, pantheistic, opinions, and no small number of our own countrymen are silent converts to the same doctrine. On this strange want of decision of a point which common sense settles without difficulty, a question naturally occurs, Cannot the argument be brought to such a crisis that there shall be universal assent or dissent? ‡

“It is very curious to notice those who imagine that the belief in God can no longer be justified often make implicit

\* Henry B. Smith's "Introduction to Christian Theology," pp. 2, 3.

† Fraser's "Blending Lights," p. 1.

‡ Crabbe's "Natural Theology," p. 3.



and even explicit confessions of the loss which they feel themselves to have sustained. Strauss and Comte having got rid, as they thought, of the old God, set about making a new one. Strauss personified the universe, and Comte personified humanity, and they endeavored to persuade us that these personified abstractions are capable of satisfying the longings of the human heart. But it has often been acknowledged, even by agnostics themselves, that such satisfaction cannot be obtained; and that, though we have no reason for thinking there is a deity, it would indeed be well for us if there were. Even when the belief in God has given way before destructive criticism, the desire for God, as a rule, persistently remains." \*

"In his posthumous essays J. S. Mill defends very strongly the agnostic doctrine that we can never have any certain knowledge with regard to the supernatural; but at the same time he insists with equal force upon the necessity of cultivating, in the region of hope and imagination, those religious ideas which had been, as he held, forever removed from the region of belief.

"The indulgence of hope with regard to the government of the universe and the destiny of man after death, if we recognize as a clear truth that we have no ground for more than a hope, is legitimate and philosophically defensible. The beneficial effect is far from trifling. It makes life and human nature a far greater thing to the feelings, and gives greater strength as well as greater solemnity to all the sentiments which are awakened in us by our fellow-creatures and mankind at large. It allays the sense of that irony of nature which is so painfully felt when we see the exertions and sacrifices of a life culminating in the formation of a wise and noble mind, only to disappear from the world when the time has just arrived at which the world seems about to begin reaping the benefit of it. . . .

\* Crabbe's "Natural Theology," p. 3.

“There is another and more important exercise of the imagination which, in the past and present, has been kept up principally by means of religious belief, and which is infinitely precious to mankind; so much so, that human excellence greatly depends upon the sufficiency of the provision made for it. This consists in the familiarity of the imagination with a conception of a morally perfect Being, and the habit of taking the approbation of such a Being as the *norma*, or standard to which to refer, and by which to regulate our characters and lives. . . . To the other inducements for cultivating a religious devotion to the welfare of our fellow-creatures, it superadds the feeling that we may be co-operating with the unseen Being to whom we owe all that is enjoyable in life. . . . It appears to me that supernatural hope, in the degree in which what I have called rational skepticism does not refuse to sanction it, may still contribute not a little to give this religion (namely, the religion of humanity) its due ascendancy over the human mind. Similarly Professor Tyndall, at the conclusion of his Belfast address, says: ‘If the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will still turn to the mystery from which it has emerged, seeking so to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith—so long as this is done, not only without intolerance or bigotry of any kind, but with the enlightened recognition that ultimate fixity of conception is here unattainable, and that each succeeding age must be held free to fashion the mystery in accordance with its own needs—then, casting aside all the restrictions of materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with the knowing faculties, may be called the *creative* faculties of man. Here, however, I touch upon a theme too great for me, but which will assuredly be handled by the loftiest minds when you and I, like streaks of morning cloud, shall have melted into the infinite azure of the past.’

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“The same admission has been made by other writers who were even more pronounced agnostics than J. Stuart Mill and Tyndall. Professor Clifford, Viscount Amberley and ‘Physicus,’ were of opinion that science had removed the religious ideas not only from the sphere of belief, but even from that of hope and imagination. Yet they honestly admit, in pathetic and eloquent words, the loss which <sup>Belief in God essential to human comfort.</sup> has thus been inflicted on the world. Professor Clifford said on one occasion, ‘We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven upon a soulless earth, and we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion was dead.’ Viscount Amberley again, after having endeavored to prove that the Supreme Being is absolutely inscrutable and unknowable, and that, therefore, all the old ideas and hopes of religion must be given up, says: ‘I can attempt no answer to the objection which will no doubt be urged, that so abstract and cold a faith as that expounded here can afford no satisfaction to the moral sentiments. Indeed, I must to a certain extent admit the reality of the loss which the adoption of this faith entails. There is consolation, no doubt, in the thought of a Heavenly Father who loves us; there is strength in the idea that He sees and helps us in our continued combat against evil; there is happiness in the hope that He will assign us in another life an infinite reward for all the endurances of this. Above all, there is comfort in the reflection that when we are parted by death we are not parted forever; that our love for those whom we have cherished on earth is not a temporary bond, which is to be broken ere long in bitterness and despair, but a possession never to be lost again—a union of souls, interrupted for a little while by the separation of the body, only to be again renewed in far greater perfection, and carried on into far higher joys than can be even imagined here. All this is beautiful and full of fascination—why should



we deny it? Candor compels us to admit that in giving it up, with the other illusions of our younger days, we are resigning a balm for the wounded spirit for which it would be hard to find an equivalent in all the repertories of science and in all the treasures of philosophy.

“‘Physicus,’ at the conclusion of his ‘Candid Examination of Theism,’ in which he has endeavored to show that the only rational attitude of the human mind toward religious questions is that of suspended judgment, says: ‘It is with the utmost sorrow that I find myself compelled to accept the conclusions here worked out. I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the new faith is a desirable substitute for the waning splendors of the old. I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual denial of God the universe has lost to me its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to work while it is day will doubtless gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words, for the night cometh when no man can work, yet, when at times I think—for think at times I must—of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as I now find it—at such times it will ever be impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For, whether it be owing to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which, to me, were the sweetest life has given, I cannot but feel that for me and for others who think as I do, the precept, Know thyself, has become transformed into the terrific oracle of *Œdipus*, Mayest thou never know the truth of what thou art.’” \*

Similar sentiments from that chaste and beautiful and fascinating essayist, and promulgator of free thought, Miss Mar-

\* Prof. Momerie’s “Belief in God,” pp. (gleaned) 8-14.

tineau, and many other leaders in the movement of what is called the new age, might be added in great number.

Blackie, in his "Natural History of Atheism," a not very remarkable book, says: "As for atheism, I have learned by the consideration of recent phases of thought, taken along with the general history of human speculation, that it is a disease of the speculative faculty which must be expected to re-appear from time to time, when men are shaken out of the firm forms of their old beliefs, and have not yet had time to work themselves into the well-defined mould of a new one. It indicates, in fact, a chaotic state of mind analogous to that physical chaos which makes its epiphany betwixt the destruction of an old world and the creation of a new." \*

"It is not only the Christian Church, nor only the holy Scriptures, nor only Christianity, which is attacked. The disposition is boldly proclaimed to deal with root and branch, and to snap utterly the ties which, under the still venerable name of religion, unite man with the unseen world, and lighten the struggles and woes of life by the hopes of a better land.

"These things are done as the professed results and the newest triumphs of modern thought and modern science; but I believe that neither science nor thought is responsible any more than liberty is responsible for the misdeeds committed in their names. Upon the ground of what is termed evolution, God is relieved of the labor of creation; in the name of unchangeable laws, he is discharged from governing the world; and his function of judgment is also dispensed with, as justice and benevolence are held to forbid that men should hereafter be called to strict account for actions which, under these unchangeable laws, they may have committed. But these are only the initial stages of the process. Next we are introduced to the doctrine of the

Gladstone  
versus Herbert  
Spencer.

\* "Natural History of Atheism," pp. 2, 3.



absolute and the unconditioned; and under the authority of these phrases (to which and many other phrases, in their proper place, I have no objection) we are instructed that we can know nothing about God, and therefore can have no practical relations with him. One writer—or as it is now termed, thinker—announces with pleasure that he has found the means of reconciling religion and science. The mode is in principle most equitable. He divides the field of thought between them. To science he awards all that of which we know, or may know, something; to religion he leaves a far wider domain—that of which we know and can know nothing. This sounds like jest, but it is melancholy earnest; and I doubt whether any such noxious crop has been gathered in such rank abundance from the press of England in any former year of our literary history as in the present year of our redemption—eighteen hundred and seventy-two.” \*

Mr. Disraeli, in his preface to “Lothair,” expresses himself thus: “It cannot be denied that the aspect of the world and this country, to those who have faith in the spiritual nature of man, is at this time dark and distressful. They listen to doubts, and even denials, of an active Providence; what is styled materialism is in the ascendant. To those who believe that an atheistical society, though it may be polished and amiable, involves the seeds of anarchy, the prospect is full of gloom.”

“This disturbance in the mind of nations has been occasioned by two causes: first, by the powerful assaults on the divinity of the Semitic literature by the Germans; and secondly, by recent discoveries of science, which are hastily supposed to be inconsistent with our long-received convictions as to the relation between Creator and created.”

\* Mr. Gladstone’s Address, delivered at the Liverpool Collegiate Institute, Dec. 21, 1872. The writer or thinker referred to is Mr. Herbert Spencer.

Dr. Winwood Reade, in his "Martyrdom of Man," says: "In order to build we must destroy. Not only the Syrian superstition must be attacked, but the belief in a 'personal God,' which engenders a slavish and oriental condition of the mind, and the belief in a posthumous reward which engenders a slavish and solitary condition of the heart." \*

These excerpts are of a piece with a multitude of others which might easily be gathered from the pages of the most thoughtful publications of the times, and with the utterances of devout and earnest men on all sides. There is unmistakably a wide-spread disturbance of Christian mind on matters of fundamental Christian faith where, for the last century, there has been generally prevailing the most assured and tranquil confidence. The many books on the "reconciliation of science and religion," "bearings of science on religion," "harmony of science and religion," and kindred themes, by the most learned and able men of the times, and the general tone and bearing of educated men and professionals on matters of faith, all point to unrestful and feverish conditions which are symptomatic and portentous of evil. The doubt is not of a low and vulgar kind, which springs from coarse immorality and evil practices, and which, being born of ignorance, may be left to neglect as innoxious and harmless. It is not that insignificant thing which acquires importance only by being noticed, and is propagated by receiving attention. There could be no more fatal mistake than to imagine any thing of the kind. Coarse infidelity to-day, however it exists and finds vulgar exponents, is neither the habit nor the danger among respectable classes. If it stood alone it might well be left to neglect, and would be sure to perish of its own loathsomeness.

\* Taken from Notes to chapter one of Jackson's "Philosophy of Natural Theology," and quoted from a review of Mr. Reade's book in an English journal.



This is a thoughtful age, and despite its mammonizing and love of material pleasures it is an earnest age: earnest in the truest and highest sense; earnest in the belief in truth, and in the appreciation of truth, and in the determination at all cost to have truth; earnest in the single purpose to free itself and coming ages from "the ignorance and cunning craftiness of men;" and at whatever sacrifice to work out a permanent and genuine deliverance from fables and superstitions.

The men most conspicuously engaged in this work, whatever else may be said or thought of them, are, with few exceptions, honest, learned, and heroic men; men who have won by genius, and honest hard toil, better than genius, first positions in eclectic chairs, and university professorships, awarded only to the most deserving; and who, in ability as authors in their respective lines, have gained the position of leaders of thought; authorities among the circles most capable of awarding such distinction; men of character and power who mean to be heard, and who have a right to be heard, and whose voice will not be checked by clamor or intimidation. They do not appeal to prejudice or passion, and they will neither respect nor fear prejudice or passion. They are dealing heavy blows, and to us who retain respect for and confidence in religious faiths they seem cruel blows, even while we cannot but feel that they are brave and manly. We wish that they might carry forward their work without disturbing our faith. Many of them wish so, too; they are themselves as much distressed by the trouble they create to faith as are the most devout believers; many of them are devout believers. Would we restrain them? For myself I must answer, No. The duty of the hour is not interference, but co-operation—brave, courageous, honest, earnest co-operation. What is worth saving will be saved; what is not worth the having will

2

perish. The one thing we must determine to have is painstaking honesty; destiny will take care of the rest.

It is beyond all controversy that Christianity is summoned to the defense of the very citadel of its life. Many sincerely believe that the citadel is already taken. Some rejoice and exult; not a few, even of the storming column, Christianity attacked at the citadel. are more sad than jubilant; and others are looking on with mingled feelings of dismay and wonder. It is certain that all former assaults are, in array of forces and strategic skill, nothing as compared with the present mode of attack. The enemy has almost ceased to give any attention to the outposts, and boldly presses to the very key of the position, knowing well that if he can carry this the outposts will capitulate without further struggle; and knowing well, also, that unless he carries this all his efforts will be futile and fruitless.

The discussion carried forward in this treatise is for the defense of the citadel. It is an attempt to answer, not dogmatically but rationally, the question, Is there a God? It proposes to examine the question in every phase of it—to lift up every point of difficulty that has been alleged, and, without evasion, give a fair and searching investigation. Whatever has been alleged of weight against the doctrine, it is believed will be produced, if possible, in its greatest strength. We aim to go down to the foundations—to slur nothing, to conceal nothing, to ask no indulgence. We challenge the severest scrutiny. Every man is interested in the issue.

Man is a mind. Mind interrogates and seeks to penetrate mysteries—to know and explain all parts. If we were asked to define man we would say of him, In Man a being who asks questions. general he is a being who asks questions and strives to get answers to them. This is his great distinction. In the primitive germ he is an incipient interrogator and a potential respondent. Fully matured, he is lost



to vision in the encyclopedic range and heights of knowledge wrought in his strivings to find out and set in order solutions of problems. He is the only being of whom we have experience that asks questions—the only one that busies himself in trying to find answers. The worlds revolve in their great orbits, through their almost infinite cycles, without asking any questions. The elements and forces work on, turning out strange figures and dissolving them again, but ask no questions; they work according to flawless laws in flawless obedience, forever and forever, but ask no questions. Trees grow and flowers bloom over desert wastes in an endless succession of springs, but ask no questions. Dumb and speechless nature moves on in ceaseless round of busy and beneficent activity, but asks no questions. Birds and beasts—the whole realm of animated existence—live and die, but ask no questions. Their eyes sometimes startle us with expressions of vague wonder, surprise, astonishment, curiosity; but they ask no questions. In all the vast realm of being, from utmost height of heaven to widest horizon, all nature moves from the past into the future, from the known to the unknown, moves in majestic order, but asks no questions. The music of the spheres, the roll of thunder the cadences of the storm, the voices of life, multi-noted, ask no questions.

Man alone, amid the universal sweep of being, ponders, interrogates. The first flash of his eye reveals an interrogation point. A question is his vital breath. Not to ask Man's nature compels him to investigate. it is asphyxia—death. It is his essence. He enters existence with a question. His expiring gaze is a question. He ascends the eternities with questions at every stage. The first, last, deepest aspiration of his being is to find an answer to the questions which his very existence forces upon him. He must, by stress of absolute necessity, ask questions.

All his questions, and they are endless in number and con-



tinuance, mainly group around seven points: What? Whence? Why? How? Whither? When? What then? By whom, or by what, are involved. The first intelligible signs of consciousness are gropings—mind trying to adjust itself; for man is mind trying to adjust himself to himself and to things.

Like other animals, he eats and sleeps, feels hunger and weariness—or rather, the animal frame with which he finds himself associated passes through these experiences—but, unlike them, he does not rest. These things, which satisfy all others, are not a sufficiency for him. In fact they do not at all reach him in his true self. He lives outside of them. They belong to another order. He does not work into the visible and tangible system as a part of it. He has a hunger Man not a stomach but a mind. which its dainties do not appease; aspirations, longings, which it cannot satisfy; questionings which keep ever disturbing him, and which it cannot answer. If he were simply a stomach, nature would content him, as it does the buffalo or stork. His troubles all come from the fact that he is not a stomach, but a mind; that he cannot live on protoplasm, but must busy himself with thought.

*Sui generis*, he walks the globe as a prisoner paces his dungeon—chafes as a slave in galling chains. Why this unrest? Simply because he is more than a seed from which grows a California tree—more than an ovum from which is hatched an eagle—more than a cell which expands into a lion—more than an organism which assimilates nutrition. These are all uncomplaining. Growth—development—unsought, comes to them and satisfies them. They want nothing that nature does not furnish them. From eternity to eternity they know nothing of trouble. It is enough that they live. They do not concern themselves with the past. They have neither desires nor apprehensions with respect to the future. They do not perplex themselves about the present. Ignorance does not distress

them. No philosophers or philosophies disquiet their repose. They do not torture their brains about questions of law, natural or moral. They have no ethical problems—no unrealized ideals—no vexatious sense of mystery.

Man lets nothing pass without a question. It is the tribute which he imposes on whatever passes under his observation. He demands what they are, where they came from, why they are here, how they got here, where they are going. He will have the answer. No inquisitor was ever so relentless. He does not hesitate to resort to tortures. He chases microscopic atoms through crucial fires to find their genesis; tortures toads and insects to learn their story; arms himself against nature to rob her of her mysteries; asks the great globes what they are made of—whence, why, when, and how they came. Chases them back through geological æons to see their birth—pursues them up through eternity to find their end. Challenges the Eternal himself—is bold enough to press up to the very throne of his power, and audaciously demand his right to be—the secret of his existence—the meaning and outcome of his plan. A mote of yesterday, he commands the universe to stand and answer.

This is man. But, much as he is concerned about things, there are deeper questions which haunt him in all his re-  
The search after truth not vain. searches. Out of this questioning habit arises his unrest. From it springs his greatness. It denotes him a mind. It posits that he was made for truth. It declares that to him knowledge of truth is as essential as nutrition is to his body. It implies that he is capable of finding an answer. Liberty to ask questions is simply liberty for mind to live. To find the answer is mind living.

Man finds himself in existence. In the proper sense of the word he is the only being who does find himself; that is, who comes to self-consciousness. This is a fact of great significance.



Man is the only being of the earth who predicates, or can predicate, existence of itself—I am. He finds himself a rational and reflective being. He knows that he is, and that he is of recent origin; that he was not, and that, a short time since, he somehow began to be. He formulates this to himself—he knows it.

He looks forth and beholds other existences about him. He acquires knowledge of them, and becomes aware that they, like himself, were not, and in some mysterious way were ushered into existence. He perceives that they are but transient forms, which, like fleeting shadows, come, remain for a brief day, then vanish and disappear. He sees life thus, in countless forms, teeming the earth and air and seas; generation chasing generation in quick and rapid succession, and hastening on to oblivion; the solid earth only abiding and perpetually devouring her children.

He lifts his eyes from the earth and beholds the heavens, far above, overarching his earthly home. The amazing magnificence awes him, overwhelms him. The sun disappears behind the rims of the world—the mystery of night sets in—darkness folds its solemn mantle over the face of nature—her voices are hushed—motion ceases—the stars come out and twinkle from their dim, distant homes—nature sleeps. Silence, distance, darkness, fill the imagination with a sense of the infinite, the boundless, the abiding, the eternal.

Nature is not always in placid mood. He hears the thunder crash across the sky, sees the lightning glare and leap in the cloud, feels the jar of the elements when the storm drives and hustles through the air, learns by experience that the vast field of being is a magazine stored with dangerous and destructive forces.

He finds himself a helpless, dependent creature, amid the play of these mighty and invisible agents. Behind him is all

the unknown past, before him the inscrutable future, around him on every side impenetrable mystery. What baffles him more than all is the discovery within himself of unaccountable laws which dominate him despite himself, and which ever insist on being recognized; the sense of obligation, of responsibility, of right and wrong which penetrates the very secrets of his inmost thoughts and feelings; something which reproves and rebukes him, and tears him with remorse and terror; something which, forever holding before him an ideal, goads and lashes him for failures to realize, and premonishes him of avenging consequences; a Nemesis that is forever following him and will overtake him by and by; something which keeps telling him that death, which to all other creatures opens downward to oblivion, to him angles outward to deeper consciousness. If he could, weary of the tantalizing apprehension, he would refuse to think: he cannot.

The problem of the ages is borne in upon his mind—the problem which sooner or later must press itself upon every soul of man. Whence is this, what means this, whither tends this? Whence came I, why am I here, what awaits me? What is that mystery of power above me whose invisible presence I feel and discern, pervasive of the universe in all time and in every place, working on every side and forever? This something, that seems to have meaning—that appears to be working according to a plan—that exhibits tokens of wisdom and thought as well as purpose and power: what is it? This vast immeasurable and inscrutable agent, higher than the heavens and mightier than all the forces of nature, whose messengers they are; who lives amid universal decay; who goes forward majestically through all time with unwasting strength; who hangs worlds over the empty space, and guides them in their illimitable orbits; who kindles their unconsuming fires and



lights up immensity with their glory; who weaves the tissues of every living fiber, and paints the hues of every feather and flower and bow in the cloud; who brings life out of death, appoints its thrills of ecstasy and pain, then turns it into dust again; who sent me here, and endowed me with that mystery of self-consciousness, a soul that can think and feel and know itself, that experiences the pangs of sorrow and remorse and the dull anguish of despair and knows the ecstasy of love and hope; that mystery of a nature that can expand and grow forever to a limitless height, and that, in its deepest yearning, ever looks up to Him, and in some form aspires after his favor; which even in death still clings to life and asserts its immortality—what is that nameless agent? What means he? Whither tends his resistless, majestic movement?

To not ask this question is not to be human. To not feel that it is the gravest problem that has engaged the thought of man, or that by possibility ever can engage the thought of man, is to deny the deepest instinct of his nature. To treat it indifferently, or dismiss it flippantly, is to outrage the consciously profoundest interests of his being. To despair of a satisfactory answer is to sink himself, and all humanity, into a gloom, an abysm of despair, which must inevitably rob life of all its comfort, and render existence itself an unendurable mockery and torture.

To dismiss the subject is impossible while man is man. Each generation will repeat it, and bring to its solution whatever new light research and experience may discover. To say that there is no hope in the discussion, that the problem is insolvable, that the last result of reason is the discovery that there is an unknowable agent, a something—or, at most, an unknowable agent that works for righteousness—is to say what the facts of the argument do not sustain.

As it is the loftiest and gravest theme that ever has engaged

human thought, so, also, it has employed the best minds that have appeared along the ages, in their greatest endeavors and noblest efforts. There is no prospect that the debate will ever close. The exigencies of the case are such, in their nature, as will keep it permanently open and perennial. The progress of knowledge will formulate new weapons of assault and defense to whatever answer may be given, and the same causes that have always existed will array fresh combatants, but, whatever disasters may come, truth is sure to win.

The ages have struggled with the problem. The struggle continues to-day with unflagging interest. Many answers have been returned. It is obvious that there can be but one that is true. Whether or not the adequate answer has been given or will ever be found—the answer that will satisfy all the demands of reason, and forever put to rest all doubt and further disputation—it is certain that there *is* a true answer.

The answers rendered may be classified as theistic and anti-theistic—the answers of religion and faith illuminated and sustained by reason, and the answers of philosophy and science of doubtful harmony with faith and religion, and of unreasoning incredulity opposed to faith.

The theistic answer is simple, intelligible, and self-consistent. The antitheistic answers are diverse, involved, and mutually destructive and subversive of each other. The theistic answer meets all the demands of the mind which raises the question, and covers all the inclusions of the problem, leaving nothing unanswered. The anti-theistic theories—no one of them, nor all combined, by the concession of their own advocates, attempts to cover the most vital issues involved. That this is so, as we believe, will appear in the progress of the discussion.

Obscure as the problem is, and involved in the deepest shades of mystery, it somehow lies so level to human faculties

The theistic view intelligible and satisfactory.



that the first movement of reason goes direct to its solution by a sort of instinct. All the embarrassments which reason finds investing the subject arise when it is called upon to explain. It is of no small significance that it spontaneously reaches a conclusion essentially the same in every case without understanding why or how.

“Reasoning on natural theology,” says Jackson (that is, fundamentally on the being of God), falls necessarily into two divisions. The first is made from arguments drawn from the world without us. The second, of arguments drawn from the world within us. These divisions have sometimes been called physico-theology and ethico-theology; but the latter designation is far too restricted for the line of thought which the division embraces. Each path of reasoning is subject to a close division. We may argue affirmatively to a definite conclusion. We may also argue negatively with the same end in view; we may show how much more difficult and less tenable is the contradictory hypothesis.” \*

Suppose the question pure and simple, apart from every other question and implication, to be to account for what we see, given average human intelligence; does any body imagine that there would be any difference of opinion on the point that there has been a cause for what we see? Would any body doubt that the cause was an intelligent cause? Would he be able to believe that it was mere fortuity—chance? Would he be able to think that the sun was not made with a purpose; that its heat and shining were pure accident; that the earth was not made for the sustentation of life; that the orbital and axial motions were not designed for seasons, and day and night; that the atmosphere and rain and soils were not intended to promote vegetation; that vegetable existence had no reference whatever to animal existence; that eyes were not made

\* Jackson's “Philosophy of Natural Theology,” page 14.

for seeing, teeth for mastication, stomachs for digestion, food for nutrition, blood for building up the system, lungs for respiration, legs, wings, fins, sinuosities for locomotion; the generative organs for procreation; skin, hair, wool, fur, feathers for protection, beautification, and warmth; that all this marvelous order and adaptation, without which the universe could not exist, represents no meaning? Is it a natural conclusion? Does mind work into it with the feeling that it is a satisfactory explanation, or a thing easy to believe; that it is in such harmony with its spontaneous working that it realizes no jar or sense of incongruity when it reaches it or attempts to affirm it? Nay, does it not instantly and instinctively resent it, utterly refuse it, pronounce it impossible—a thing absolutely unthinkable?

Left to its own unbiased impulse, all other questions aside, entirely uninfluenced, would it not come to an entirely different conclusion? Given all its knowledge of the universe up to date, acquired in every way, is mind favorably disposed to the thought that there is no meaning in any thing? Is that the last working postulate of science? Do the learned men who are working so nobly in striving to interpret nature, and who are succeeding so grandly, nevertheless feel that they are interpreting that which has no meaning? If there is meaning in nature, can it be thought that it has meaning in the absence of a mind that puts meaning in it? Is it natural to think of ideas without thinking of a being who has them?

Theism offers the solution to the problem which we believe to be the correct and only rational solution, as meeting fully all the demands laid upon it by all the facts of the universe yet discovered by man, and all the intellectual, moral, and religious demands which center in the nature of man and require appeasement and satisfaction. And yet it is this

Unsatisfying  
nature of an  
antitheistic  
view.



theory which is the center around which the fiercest fires of controversy rage; it is the *vexata quæstio* which keeps up the tumult.

All other forms and attempts at solution combine their forces against this one; they are indeed but so many strategic methods for storming this citadel. Their differences (the differences of antitheism) are not sufficient to make a quarrel or to keep the question alive, except as their mutual antagonism to this enlists them in a common service. What these attempts at solution are will appear.

The inspiration of opposition against the theistic solution comes from two very different sources, and the opposition manifests itself in two totally different methods. There is a low type of atheism which characterizes the abandonedly ignorant and vicious. It has no thought in it, springs from no difficulties of the reason, and is nourished by no facts or principles or grounds of any kind affecting intelligence. It is purely a spawn of the evil passions, a protest against the restraints of law, malignant hate of a theory which restrains and limits it and threatens it. It is the atheism of the sty.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that all atheism is of this paternity, or calls for the same treatment that this does. There is an atheism that is born of the intellect, and which is not at all necessarily engendered of vice; an atheism of educated mind, not unfrequently found associated with unexceptionable morality, and is in no respect voluntary. It is too respectable to be ignored, and too serious in its grounds to be puffed away with a breath. It has both moral and intellectual grounds. Its moral sensibilities are troubled with the serious aspects of the divine government, as interpreted especially by Christian theists. Its intellectual difficulties are those which perplex all thoughtful minds. And it is just to the facts to say, that a factor in bringing doubters to their unsatisfactory



position, and in causing them to range themselves on the side and under the flag of atheism, has been, and is, some characteristics of the defenders and defenses of theism. We refer to the narrowness, bigotry, and intolerance which have characterized so many in dealing with truth, and which so scandalize men of science and learning; the Tendency of atheism. egotism and superficiality which to such a degree blemish their modes of dealing with problems which, in the onward progress of the race, are forever emerging. Accustomed to believe on authority, without questioning, they frequently become intolerant of reason; and, in turn, reason first becomes impatient and then contemptuous of them. Any system of thought which depends on authority, or is required to adhere to traditions, must necessarily, in the mental movement of the race, become encumbered with so many outgrown fables as to be unable to bear itself against the current of progress. The fables must yield or the truth itself perish.

#### ANTITHEISTIC THEORIES.

In logical order the antitheistic theories are the agnostic, the pantheistic, the polytheistic, the atheistic or materialistic.

*That of the agnostic.*—Herbert Spencer is the most conspicuous exponent of this school. The elder and younger Agnosticism of Spencer, etc. Mill, and especially John Stuart Mill and Matthew Arnold, in one form, and Sir William Hamilton and Dean Mansel in another, while both claiming to be orthodox theists, lend it their support.

The ancient Pyrrhonists, of whom there are no exponents in modern thought, discredited all knowledge. They Agnosticism. claimed that such were the illusions of sense and reason alike, that the only rational attitude of mind is that of

universal doubt—absolute skepticism. But to affirm doubt was itself a contradiction of their theory, since it asserted that there was at least one thing of which we were not in doubt—namely, that we doubt; and that it is a dictate of reason that we should doubt all things.

Agnosticism is a modification of this ultra system. It does not deny the possibility of knowledge with respect to some things, but only of supersensible things; but in its last result, pushed to its logical outcome, it must <sup>Results of ag-</sup><sub>nosticism.</sub> be admitted that it undermines all confidence in the validity of any of our conclusions.

The real paternity of the agnostic phase of thought is, without doubt, Hume's doctrine of cause. His doctrine of causation, reducing it to simple succession, displaced the idea of efficiency in the antecedent, and denied any connection whatever except the simple relation of precedence and succedence. Agnosticism is simply the affirmation of the principle that we know nothing of efficient causes, and so nothing of the efficient cause of the universe. If there be any such cause, either final or efficient, it is unknown, and, according to this theory, must forever remain unknown.

I cannot do better than to quote from Fisher:\* "Agnosticism," he says, "the system of Herbert Spencer, includes disbelief in the personality of God, but also equally in the personality of man. There is, of course, the <sup>Views of</sup><sub>Fisher.</sub> verbal admission of a subject and object of knowledge. This distinction, it is even said, 'is the consciousness of a difference transcending all other differences.'

"But subject and object, knower and thing known, are pronounced to be purely phenomenal. The reality behind them is said to be utterly incognizable. Nothing is known of it but

\* The references in this quotation are in the words of Spencer—"First Principles," pp. 157, 493, 557.



its bare existence. So, too, we are utterly in the dark as to the relations subsisting among things as distinguished from their transfigured manifestation in consciousness; for these manifestations reveal nothing save the bare existence of objects, together with relations between them which are perfectly inscrutable. . . . They are effects in consciousness of unknown agencies. The order in which the effects occur suggests, we are told, a corresponding order in these agencies. . . . ‘What we are conscious of as properties of matter, even down to its weight and resistance, are but subjective affections produced by objective agencies, which are unknown and unknowable.’ These effects are generally classified as matter, motion, and force. These terms express certain ‘likenesses of kind,’ the most general likenesses, in the subjective affections thus produced. Matter and motion, space and time are reducible to force, but ‘force’ only designates the subjective affection in its ultimate or most general expression. Of force as an objective reality we know nothing. The same is true of cause and of every other term descriptive of power. There *is* cause, there *is* power apart from our feeling, but as to what they are we are entirely in the dark. ‘The interpretation of all phenomena in terms of matter, motion, and force, is nothing more than the reduction of our complex symbols of thought to the simplest symbols; and when the equation is brought to its lowest terms the symbols remain symbols still.’ ‘A power, of which the nature remains forever inconceivable, and to which no limits, in time or space, can be imagined, works in us certain effects. Thus all our science consists in a classification of states of consciousness, which are the product of the inscrutable cause. Reality, in any other sense, is a *terra incognita*.’” \*

In the theory of the agnostic there is some truth poisoned

\* “The Grounds of Theistic Belief,” pp. 85, 86.



with fatal error. It admits that there is an inscrutable agent—a something which it calls the unknown and unknowable. This is a half truth. In a sense God <sup>Agnosticism contains some truth.</sup> is both unknown and unknowable. He is not known as we know trees and horses and stars. “No man hath seen God at any time.” In this sense the Bible itself is agnostic. Nor do we know God as we know ourselves. Nor do we know ourselves as we know things. There is a sense, then, in which God is unknown and unknowable. But there is a sense in which he is known, and, as we shall see, not simply as an inscrutable agent—a vast, vague, indefinite power. He does not come to knowledge as things do to sense, but through sense. We do not see him, but we do see that he is, and much of what he is, though not all. As infinite he transcends our faculties; “parts of his ways are known,” but “parts are past finding out.” He is the inscrutable.

We know him much as we know our fellow-men, but with a difference. The superficial and ignorant, and even the learned of a certain school, suppose we know men as we know horses and trees, and they never think of denying the possibility of knowing men. But in point of fact we no more know men in this way than we know God. Man is not an object of sense at all, he is as invisible as God. In this respect, at least, if in no other, he is a true child of God. We know men by means of words and deeds addressed to sense and by self-consciousness. Thus they reveal themselves to us. In the same manner, and yet with a difference, we know God. He reveals himself to us, not directly, but in and through creation and providence; but much remains hidden in the nimbus which must forever envelop the Infinite.

Thus it appears that there is a modicum of truth in agnosticism—in the words which by Spencer, Arnold, and others more orthodox have become cant phrases, “the unknown and

unknowable;" but so far as they are made to imply, as they often are, that it is unknown and unknowable whether there is an unknown and unknowable agent at the foundation of the universe—and so far as it does imply that we know nothing, or but little, and that indefinitely, of this vast unknowable infinite—it is not only an error, but a most damaging and ruinous blunder, wholly unsupported by facts or evidence of any kind.

Agnosticism lives on its semblance to truth, as a counterfeit coin circulates on its resemblance to the true gold. This in Agnosticism a part. There are other elements which give it a counterfeit of truth. more dangerous currency. It is plausible. It assumes the air of attractive modesty in speaking of the infinite. The penumbra of mystery, in which the subject is involved, which all minds feel and all candid minds confess, places their admission of ignorance in accord with common experience. Their notion liberates the mind from the feeling of obligation to burden itself with what it is pleased to assume is an unprofitable, and, in the outcome, inevitably fruitless speculation. It frees the conscience from the bondage to a disagreeable law of an unknown and unknowable lawgiver—a myth, a something—perchance a nothing.

In its ripeness and inwardness agnosticism means practical atheism. The unknowable is transformed by an easy legerdemain into the non-existent, or practically non-essential. Before passing we point out the essential error of this phase of thought. God is neither the unknowable nor yet the unknown in the true and essential meanings of the terms.

He is known as the ground of the universe, as eternal, as of wisdom equal to the wisdom displayed in its order and laws, as of power adequate to its establishing and conservation, as therefore an intelligent, free, personal Being, underived and independent. So much nature teaches as absolute truth, as will



appear in the course of our argument. That we may know yet more of his ineffable purpose and plan and method of unfolding and carrying it forward through eternity is not simply possible, or even highly probable, but rationally certain, as established by abundant and reliable evidence.

Professor Momerie says: "Our inability to know God rests, according to agnosticism, upon the fact that our knowledge is restricted to phenomena. The word phenomenon, Views of Momerie. in scientific discussions, does not mean, as in common parlance, something remarkable or uncommon. Phenomenon stands in science for any thing that appears in consciousness, either as sensation or as thought. Now the agnostic tells us—and *this is the essence of agnosticism*—that consciousness is entirely resolvable into phenomena or appearances; that it is nothing more than a series of sensations and thoughts. My consciousness at any moment is just the sensations and thoughts which I happen to be at that moment experiencing. My consciousness, considered as a whole, is the entire number of sensations and thoughts which I experience during my life-time. I exist one instant as a state of sensation, another instant as a state of thought. Now I am a feeling of pleasure, and anon a feeling of pain. At this moment I am thinking of, or am the thought of, one object; a little while ago I was thinking of, or was the thought of, another object. Taking my whole life into account, I am just the sum total of these sensations and thoughts, the entire series of my varied experiences. There is nothing underlying my sensations and thoughts which remains identical while they change and pass away. I am not myself, but my experiences. In other words, I have no soul.

"Now if it can be shown that the agnostics are wrong about the soul, it follows that they are wrong in their general principle. If we can be sure of the existence of the soul, it will follow that knowledge is not confined to phenomena. For the



soul, if a soul there be, is neither a passing sensation nor a passing thought, nor is it a collection of passing sensations and thoughts. It is a single permanent something underlying and outlasting these transitory phenomena.

“The existence of something that underlies and outlasts phenomena may be proved to demonstration by an analysis of memory. In every act of remembrance there is given us the knowledge of our personal identity or persistence. I remember, let us say, that ten years ago I met with an accident. Now, three things are involved in this remembrance. (1) There is the fact remembered, namely, the accident. (2) There is the soul or mind, which remembers the fact, or which, as we sometimes say, has the remembrance. And (3) there is a consciousness of personal identity; that is to say, a conviction that the mind or soul which is now experiencing the remembrance of the fact is the same mind or soul which formerly experienced the fact itself—that is, in other words, my mind. The identity of which I am conscious is certainly not an identity of body, for during the ten years which have elapsed my body has lost its identity. Nor is the identity an identity of phenomena, for the remembrance of the fact is something essentially different from the fact itself. The identity of which I am conscious is an identity of soul. I am sure I know that I, who am now remembering a certain accident, once actually experienced it; and that in the meantime I, one and the self-same subject, a single, individual, and permanent being, have been apprehending sensations, and thinking thoughts, and remembering events, and gathering up those varied experiences into the unity of a personal life. Without a permanent and persistent soul there could be no memory; for it is just the recognition of this permanence which is the characteristic feature of every act of remembrance.”\*

*Pantheism is the second antitheistic theory.*—Pantheism is

\* Prof. Momerie's "Belief in God," pp. 32-35.

the name given to a form of antitheistic thought, or, in the last result, a form of atheism. Of it Dr. Hodge says: <sup>Hodge on pantheism.</sup> "If the etymology of the word pantheism be allowed to determine its meaning, the answer to the question, What is pantheism? is easy. The universe is God, and God is the universe. Τὸ πᾶν Θεός ἐστι. This is not only the signification of the word and the popular idea usually attached to it, but it is the formal definition often given to the term. Thus Wegscheider says: '*Pantheismus [est] ea sententia, qua mundum non secretum a numine ac disparatum, sed ad ipsam Dei essentiam pertinere quidam opinati sunt.*'\* This, however, is pronounced by the advocates of the doctrine a gross misrepresentation. The idea that the universe, as the aggregate of individual things, is God, is, they say, a form of thought which the earliest philosophy of the East had surmounted. It might as well be said that the contents of a man's consciousness, at any one time, were the man himself; or that the waves of the ocean were the ocean itself. It is because so many pantheists take the words in the sense above indicated that they deny that they are pantheists, and affirm their belief in the being of God. As the system which is properly designated pantheism does exclude the popular view of the subject, derived from the etymology of the word, and as it has been held in very different forms, it is not easy to give a concise and satisfactory answer to the question, What is pantheism? The three principal forms in which the doctrine has been presented are (1) That which ascribes to the infinite and universal being, the attributes (to a certain extent at least) of both mind and matter, namely, thought and extension. (2) That which ascribes to it only the attributes of matter—materialistic pantheism. (3) That which ascribes to it only the attributes of spirit—idealistic pantheism."†

\* "Institutiones Theologiæ," fifth ed., Halle, p. 215.

† "Systematic Theology," vol. i, pp. 299, 300.



Spinoza, the father of modern pantheism, says: "I have opinions as to God and nature entirely different from those

Views of Spi- which modern Christians are wont to vindicate.  
noza.

To my mind God is the immanent (that is, the intramundane) and not the transcendent (that is, the supra-mundane) cause of all things—that is, the totality of finite objects is posited in the essence of God, and not in his *will*. Nature, considered *per se*, is one with the nature of God." "God does not act in pursuance of a purpose, but only according to the necessity of his nature. Every thing follows from nature with the same logical necessity as that by which the attributes of a thing follow from its idea, or from the nature of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles." "This," says Christlieb, "expresses the fundamental view of every form of pantheism. Even Hegel's conception of God, as the absolute idea or the absolute spirit which, in eternal self-movement, proceeds from itself and becomes nature, and then again reverting to itself becomes a self-conscious spirit, is in truth only another name for the same thing. For Spinoza himself distinguishes between nature 'begetting' and 'begotten' (*natura naturans et naturata*). The latter is the ever-varying phenomenal world, the former the intermittent bourn from which these phenomena take their rise, and into which they sink again." \*

So far as pantheism can claim to be a system of thought, or an explanation of the universe, it may be reduced to the following principles: (*a*) it is a system of pure monism, either materialistic or idealistic. It excludes all distinction between God and the universe. "The idea of the finite," says Cousin, "and the infinite, and of their necessary connection as cause and effect, meet in every act of intelligence, nor is it possible to separate them from each other; though distinct they are bound

\* "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p. 163.



together, and constitute a triplicity and unity." \* "The first term (the infinite), though absolute, exists not absolutely in itself, but as an absolute cause which must pass into action, and manifest itself in the second (the finite). The finite cannot exist without the infinite, and the infinite can only be realized by developing itself in the finite." † "As God is made known only in so far as he is absolute cause, on this account, in my opinion, he cannot but produce, so that the creation ceases to be unintelligible, and God is no more without a world than a world without God." ‡ "*Ohne Welt kein Gott; und ohne Gott keine Welt.*" "However they differ as to the nature of the infinite as such, whether it be matter or spirit; or that of which both thought and extension (potentially) can be predicated; or, whether it be thought itself, or force, or cause, or nothing, that is, of which nothing can be affirmed or denied—a simple unknown quantity—they all agree that it has no existence either before or out of the world. The world is, therefore, not only consubstantial, but co-eternal with God." §

The system (b) precludes the idea of creation, or of beginning, to finite existence; the finite is the infinite, or but a phase thereof, in its perpetual shifting forms. They deny that the infinite and absolute Being in itself has either intelligence, consciousness, or will. The infinite comes into existence in these respects in the finite. The life, consciousness, knowledge, and intelligence of the former is simply that which exists in the latter. There is no proper personality in God, as personality implies a distinction between the self and the not self; and such distinction is inconsistent with the nature of the infinite, who is the All and One. As he comes into conscious-

\* Henry's "Psychology," first ed., p. xviii.

† Wright's "History of Philos. Trans.," p. 78.

‡ Henry's "Psychology," fourth ed., p. 447.

§ Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, 301.

ness only in the world, he attains to personality only in the finite and fugitive individual consciousness. "The true doctrine of Hegel on this subject," says Michelet, "is not that God is a person as distinguished from other persons; neither is he simply the universal or absolute substance. He is the movement of the absolute, ever making itself subjective; and in the subjective first comes to objectivity or to true existence." \*

According to pantheism, "Man is not an individual subsistence. He is but a moment in the life of God; a wave on the surface of the sea; a leaf which falls and is renewed year after year. When the body, which makes the distinction of persons among men, perishes, personality ceases with it. There is no conscious existence for man after death. The absorption of the soul in God, of the finite into the infinite, is the highest destiny that pantheism can acknowledge for man. As man is only a mode of God's existence, his acts are the acts of God, and as the acts of God are necessary, it follows that there can be no freedom of the will in man." †

"Pantheism, in making man a mode of God's existence, and in denying all freedom of the will, and in teaching that all 'phenomenal activity' is 'a transient manifestation' of the activity of God, precludes the possibility of sin. This does not mean that there is in man no sentiment of approbation or disapprobation, no subjective differences between right and wrong. This would be as absurd as to say there is no difference between pleasure and pain. But if God be at once God, nature, and humanity; if reason in us be God's reason, his intelligence our intelligence, his activity our activity; if God be the substance of which the world is the phenomenon; if we

\* "Geschichte der letzten Systeme der Philosophie in Deutschland," vol. ii, p. 647.

† Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, p. 303.



are only moments in the life of God—then there can be nothing in us which is not in God. Evil is only limitation or undeveloped good.” Spinoza teaches that “sin is nothing positive.” Professor Baur, of Tübingen, says: “Evil is what is finite; for the finite is negative; the negative of the infinite.”

“Pantheism is self deification. If God comes to existence in the world, and if every thing that is, is a manifestation of God, it follows that (so far as this earth is concerned, and so far as pantheists allow and acknowledge) the soul of man is the highest form of the existence of God. As the souls of men differ very much one from another, one being much superior to others, the greater the man the more divine he is; that is, the more does he represent God, the more of the divine essence does he reveal. The human race is the incarnation of God, which is a process from eternity to eternity. ‘Mankind,’ says Strauss, ‘is the God-man; the key of a true Christology is, that the predicates which the Church gives to Christ, as an individual, belong to one idea, a genuine whole.’

“There is only one step further, and that is, the deification of evil. That step pantheists do not hesitate to take; so far as evil exists it is as truly a manifestation of God as good. The wicked are only one form of the self-manifestation of God; sin is only one form of the activity of God. If God be every thing and there be a Satan, God must be Satan. Rosenkranz says that the mind is horrified at such language only because it does not recognize the intimate connection between good and evil; that evil is in good and good in evil. Without evil there can be no good.

“The atheist cannot blaspheme with such power as this; his blasphemy is merely negative. He merely says: There is no God. It is only out of pantheism that a blasphemy can proceed so wild, of such inspired mockery, so devoutly godless, so desperate in its love of the world, a blasphemy so seductive

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and so offensive that it may well call for the destruction of the world.

“Pantheism, however, becomes all things to all men. To the pure it gives scope for a sentimental religious feeling which sees God in every thing and every thing in God. To the proud it is the source of intolerable arrogance and self-conceit; to the sensual it gives authority for every form of indulgence. The body being a mode of God’s extension, according to Spinoza’s theory, as the mind is a mode of the divine intelligence, the body has its divine rights as well as the soul. Even some of the most reputable of the pantheistic school do not hesitate to say in reference to the trammels of morality: ‘It is well that the rights of our sensual nature should, from time to time, be boldly asserted.’\* This system, therefore, as even the moderate Tholuck says: ‘Comes to the same result with the materialism of French encyclopedists, who mourned over mankind for having sacrificed the real pleasures of time for the imaginary pleasures of eternity, and the protracted enjoyments of life for the momentary happiness of a peaceful death.’

“Pantheism, therefore, merges every thing into God. The universe is the existence-form of God; that is, the universe is his existence. All reason is his reason; all activity is his activity; the consciousness of creatures is all the consciousness God has of himself; good and evil, pain and pleasure, are phenomena of God; modes in which God reveals himself, the way in which he passes from being into existence. He is not, therefore, a person whom we can worship and in whom we can trust. He is only the substance of which the universe and all that it contains are the ever-changing manifestation. Pantheism admits of no freedom, no responsibility, no conscious life after death. Cousin sums up the doctrine in this comprehensive paragraph: ‘The God of consciousness is not an abstract

Results of pan-  
theism.

\* Bischer, quoted in “Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung,” 1839, p. 31.

God, a solitary monarch exiled beyond the limits of creation, upon the desert throne of a silent eternity, and of an absolute existence which resembles even the negation of existence. He is a God at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being substance only in so far as he is cause, and cause only so far as he is substance; that is to say, being absolute cause, one and many, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end, and center, at the summit of being and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple, in a word, that is to say, at the same time God, nature, and humanity. In fact if God be not every thing, he is nothing." \*

What is the difference between the doctrine of the divine immanence and pantheism? Pantheism makes all things God; that is, God is the sum total of being. There is no part of being that is not a part of God, and God is nothing apart from the sum of the parts of being. As all essence is the essence of God, or as God is all the substance there is, so all modes and forms of substance are modes and forms of God; and all thoughts and feelings and acts are thoughts and feeling and acts of God. He is not an eternal creative mind, but he is mind as it is developed in the cosmic activity. The only form of intelligence he possesses is the intelligence which appears in finite mind. He comes to consciousness in each mind, and apart from the human mind he has no self-consciousness. He is the ever-seething sea of the universal all—now anarchy, now order, now life, now death—nothing, all things.

The doctrine of the divine immanence is, that God *pervades* all things, but is not all things. Nothing exists without him, but nothing is a part of him. He creates and permanently upholds all, but is distinct from all. He

Definition of  
the divine im-  
manence.

\* "Philosophical Fragments," preface to first edition. Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, pp. 308, 309.



is in all, and through all, and all things are momentarily by him, but all are distinct from him. All the power that appears in things is his power, but that in which the power becomes manifest is not himself.

Pantheism may be viewed as the imperfect image of a great truth or the most ultra form of a great error. If it be held as pure monism—that is, that there is but one substance, and that matter—it is simple atheistic materialism; the only difference being in name. To reduce God to matter or to elevate matter to God is to deny that God is, in the only sense in which his being is of any significance. The extremes of all God and no God meet in practical effect. To make God the sum of ever changing forms of matter, differs nothing from the position that there is nothing but changing forms of matter and resulting phenomena, of which mind—consciousness, personality—is one form.

The proper idea of God is, that of an eternal person by whom the universe was made and is upheld—the ineffable cause of all that exists. This idea is as much excluded from pantheism as from atheism. In effect pantheism is atheism. That which it predicates is not God. When it affirms that all is God it simply affirms there is no God. It excludes all the thoughts and feelings which spring from the idea of God. The idea itself totally disappears. That which remains is aimless, causeless being—a mass of eternal atoms, forever interacting, forever changing form; issuing now in this, now in that state, but abiding in no permanent condition, and having no end or purpose in its ceaseless changes. It excludes the idea of mind except as a coming and returning phase of matter. Mind is purely phenomenal and accidental. That there is any thing in this answering to the idea of God it is preposterous to pretend. To give it the sacred name is simply a perversion of language, a fraud.

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As a philosophy of the universe pantheism must be tested as any other system, but it has no right to appear in a name which implies that it recognizes the idea of God. It is a godless system assuming the sacred name, and in the assumption desecrating and blaspheming it. That which Pantheism essentially godless. it calls god is in essence brute and senseless matter. Each thing is its god—filth, the toad, the reptile, the loathsome vermin, one thing as much as another. Every act is the act of its god—each act of sensuality, of cruelty, of treachery—much as any other act. No one thing or act or feeling is more properly his or him than any other thing or act or feeling. We are god. When we worship we but worship ourselves. There is no reason for any thing. Nothing means any thing, nothing leads to any thing. There is no good in any thing, or one thing is good in the same sense in which any other thing is good. There is no such thing as right or wrong, or all things are right. All moral distinctions are simply our thoughts. Might is right. There is no reason why each one should not do as he pleases if he can. Whatever he does God does—he is God. All conflicting ideas are conflicts of God with himself. All conflicting acts are God warring with himself.

In this system man is a momentary wave over the bosom of the infinite sea, a passing phase of God. That which he was disappears, and he falls back into the abyss of God to appear as something else. A dark and fathomless and meaningless fate, forever moving on from no where to no whither, is the god of pantheism. The explanation it gives of the universe is: it is a mass of matter, which has eternally existed, which rolls on and forever through the abysses of time and space, without purpose or end, changing as it rolls now into this form, now into that, having no head or guide, and answering no use of good. It is what it is, and there is no power to make or mind to desire that it should be otherwise.



The doctrine of the divine immanence is this: first, God is distinct from the universe; second, God is cause of the universe; third, the universe as effect does not exist apart from its cause, or the cause and effect co-exist; God is in the universe as its support; so that if he were withdrawn it would cease to be. To reach the precise truth intended it must be put in contrast with the pantheistic notion on the one hand, and the naturalistic notion on the other. What we denominate the naturalistic notion, for the want of a better name, is this: that nature exists apart from God in this respect, that having been called into existence by the power of God it has the root of continuance in itself, like as a clock, being made and wound up, has the power of continuance and going in itself. It could not indeed have existed without the maker; in that respect it is nothing without him; but, having been made, it is no further dependent on him. The theory supposes that atoms were first formed, or called into existence, and, being thus formed, continue to exist in or of themselves, and will continue so to exist forever unless destroyed by an act of power; then, that they were endowed with certain tendencies, such as the clock has when wound up, and that these tendencies produce all results without any other agency than is found in themselves; that out of these come all cosmic phenomena of every kind. If God has any connection with them it is only at the remote start, and not in the process. The universe runs itself in the forms which it assumes. Thus worlds are made and kept a-going. Thus life and all organic forms are self-determined. Thus minds arise and play their part. The Infinite Starter stands apart and contemplates the vast mechanism and its self-evolved and un-purposed forms.

One form of the theory connects him more closely with the result, one leaves it at greater random. The first implies that the entire cosmic result is to the last *minutia* exactly as he

planned it, but does not imply his continuous superintendence or agency. He formed the atoms and adjusted the tendencies so completely at first that the successive movements are exactly what he determined should be, though he has never touched it since the creative act, and never will need in any way to interfere with it. It will go on forever, doing itself precisely what he made it for; but it regards him as at present, and forever in the future, as having nothing to do with it except to see it go. This is especially supposed to be true of the natural realm. The only connection it supposes existing between God and the universe is the primitive act, but that was so complete as to be operative all the way through, and there is no effect unprovided for. The case is precisely like a mechanic who should so contrive a machine that, being set up and the power adjusted, it would continue to do what the inventor intended, though he should die. Say it was adjusted for a million years, and he should die the first day, it would go on the same as if he kept an eye on it all the time, acting precisely as he willed it should. So God has made the mechanism of the universe that, though he has nothing to do with it now, it will forever continue to do just what he intended; yea, it will go on the same even if he should forget it entirely, or though himself should cease to exist. He no more touches it now than if he were non-existent.

An erroneous aspect of divine immanence.

“The idea of the Almighty impressing a law upon the sun and the earth at their creation which thereafter abides in force, and under which they of themselves must forever continue to act, is a pure fancy, imposing upon us by sounds which, on examination, are found to have no intelligible significance. If the law be regarded as this announced will or purpose, neither the sun nor the earth is capable of understanding the announcement or of retaining the knowledge of

The above view shown to be faulty.



it. They cannot receive a command and cannot obey it. The volition or purpose of the divine mind cannot be contained within them and cannot be imparted to them. In like manner power, in the sense of ability to originate change, is incapable of being conveyed to them, still less of being retained by them; they can never become actors, originators, conscious senders forth of influence from themselves.

“Power, conscious voluntary activity, is in person only, not in unconscious matter. The Supreme can make use of the earth or the sun to do what he judges fit. He can cause them to act on one another as he pleases, he can determine and secure that they shall invariably act in one way so that we shall understand that this is his fixed law. But the meaning is, that at every moment when they so act, he is the direct, present, immediate, sole causer. The laws of nature can mean nothing more or other than the will of the God present in all his works. Almighty, the course which he wills and empowers nature to take. They have, and can have, no existence except in the mind of God. They are not in nature, there is no ‘*locus in quo*’ for them except in a mind. And precisely in like manner the powers and forces of nature have no existence except in him. They are attributes of a being, not of a thing. Certain changes are produced, and we rightly argue that there must be a producer; but a producer, a real causer of change, is person, not a thing.

“The whole course of material nature, in its minutest and in its grandest departments, is nothing else than the Supreme acting directly—immediately acting.

“There is a substance, a material (be it what it may), on which and through which he acts, and this also was created by him; but at every moment, every-where, he is the direct, the immediately present, the sole actor. The will, the purpose, and the power that are evinced are in him and in him only. In

this light science is emphatically the record of divine physical providence; it is the discovery and the announcement of that fixed course according to which the Great Being has chosen to act in all the spheres of material nature. 'A law,' says Dr. Whewell, 'supposes an agent and a power; for it is the mode according to which the agent proceeds, the order according to which the power acts. Without the presence of such an agent, of such a power, conscious of the relations on which the law depends, producing the effects which the law prescribes, the law can have no efficacy, no existence. Hence we infer that the intelligence by which the law is ordained—the power by which it is put into action—must be present at all times and in all places where the effects of the law occur; that thus the knowledge and the agency of the divine Being pervade every portion of the universe, producing all action and passion, all permanence and change. The laws of matter are the laws which he, in his wisdom, prescribes to his own acts; his universal presence is the necessary condition of any course of events; his universal agency, the only organ of any efficient force.' This point admits of a more profound, perhaps a still more satisfying, exposition. In denying the reality of a physical providence, the necessity of a continual and direct divine working in the material universe, the distinction between the Creator and the created, is lost sight of.

"The eternal One, and he alone, is self-existent and absolutely independent; his being is its own ground, and out of itself needs and has no ground of existence. We can give no account of it, except that it is, ever was, ever will be, ever must be, cannot but be. The material universe, on the other hand, is altogether dependent. It began. At the will of the Creator it began. He caused it to exist, produced it by his mere power. The reason, the sole reason, of its existence lies in his will and power. It became, and it was



what it was, because he willed it, and for no other reason whatever.

“The ground—the foundation on which it stood—was this only. It had no reason of existence in itself. But having once existed, can it then, must it then, of itself continue to exist, unless the Creator expressly will that it shall not? Does a thing once created, that is, a thing the sole ground and cause of whose first being is in God, thereafter become self-existent and independent? Having received being, is it then able to sustain itself? has it then a reason, a ground in itself, for continuing in being? Does it need only the fact that it exists to insure that it shall continue to exist, unless some positive exercise of power be put forth to destroy it? Nothing can be more decisive than the answer with which these questions must be met. It is impossible even for God to impart independence, that is, self-existence, for a single moment to a single created thing. The reason, the ground for the created, in all the varieties which this term comprehends, the cause of its first being, the sole cause, is contained in the almighty will and power. On the very same principle the cause, the sole cause, of its continuing to be, at any moment afterward, is contained in that same almighty will and power.

“Just because it is created, and not uncreated, it can never be self-existent for an instant. The Supreme cannot communicate the attribute of self-existence; for this would be to create uncreated substance. The reason, the ground, of the existence of the universe, of every single atom, at every moment, is not in itself, but wholly and only in the will and power of the Creator. It is nothing, has no meaning, no reality, no being, except in him. Underneath it, and in it, sustaining it, entirely causing it, are the almighty will and the almighty power. Let these be withdrawn for a moment, let them only not be, that is, let there be no present divine volition and no present

exertion of divine power, and that moment it is nothing, for the sole ground of its being is gone.

“So far from God being able to abandon the universe (having once created it) to a course of independent self-development, his direct agency is not less necessary every moment to the very being of the minutest atom than it was in the act of creation itself.

“Whether we refer to matter or to mind, there can be self-existence, independence, only in ‘the Uncreated.’ Of mind or matter it is equally true, that the sole ground of its continuing to be, as of its beginning at any single moment to be, is in the almighty will and the almighty power directly put forth; and hence, through the entire sphere of creation, direct divine agency is a universal, a constant, a profound reality.

“Strictly speaking, there is no agent in nature but one; that is the Creator. In the flowing river and the restless ocean, in the waving grain and the solitary flower, in the gentle and the stormy wind, in the falling rain and the noiseless dew, in the beams of light and in the diffusion of heat, in all the activities of inorganic substance and of vegetable and animal matter, it is verily ‘the Supreme’ we behold—‘the Supreme’ acting.

“In the spring-time of the year, when the earth grows green and sends up its wondrous life, and fields and woods and hills are clothed with beauty, it is ‘the Supreme’ acting we behold. When, again, the produce of the earth is cut down, and by and by is gathered up—a munificent provision for man and beast—or when the snows of winter cover, and its frosts harden, the soil so lately clad with verdure and laden with abundance—or when we think of the changing seasons of the year, produced by the revolutions of our planet around the sun—or when we turn to the myriads of planets, stars, suns, and systems that replenish space, and reflect on their mighty and complicated movements, and on the vast harmony that reigns throughout—



in all, it is 'the Supreme' acting we behold. His will and his power are the only real forces in nature. Every-where there is a present God, acting not at random, but by law, law which himself has ordained, acting on principle and with fixed design. There is a plan in his working, a distinct and by us discoverable plan; it is based on order and law, an extended and harmonious system of laws. There is a physical providence as certainly as there is a Creator. The great Being has not only given existence to a universe, but he makes godlike provision for all its interests and needs. He sees forward, and his far-seeing eye connects the end with the beginning. His agency is a vast complicated but harmonious whole, through which we trace not only one mighty hand, but one unerring mind.

"There is a glorious unity in all the multiplicity and variety of mechanical, chemical, and psychological phenomena on our earth. And our earth is but a fragment of the mightier unity of the material creation. The real, ceaseless acting of 'the Supreme' throughout creation is as certain as his being. How far beyond this the divine working extends—whether there be a moral as well as a physical providence, and how much is comprehended within the sphere of moral providence is yet to be ascertained." \*

Where the true God is unknown the religious nature of man will invent many false gods.

*Polytheism has no status as a theory of universe.* It does not propose a solution of the problem of the universe. Polytheism as opposed to theism. It does not admit of statement as a system. It is of no significance for thought. It does not demand refutation. It originates in the demand of our nature for an object of worship, and in the intuition that there are ruling powers in the universe. While it is void of meaning, this fact has great significance. It is simply a corruption of the theistic idea,

\* Young's "Creator and Creation," pp. 54-60.

growing out of the ignorance and moral deterioration of men, which leads them to create gods according to their fancies. When the knowledge of the true God is lost, a dim idea of him still remains, and takes the form of the desires and fears of the worshiper. This fact is illustrated with great clearness in Walker's "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation," a very able and luminous treatise, to which the reader is referred. The mythologies of the most cultivated and the superstitions of the most degraded peoples grow on the same root, and are of equal worth—that is, they are alike worthless. The gods of polytheism are simply deifications of the objects and forces of nature—sun, moon, and stars; winds, seasons, plants, animals; and such other things as are supposed to inflict misery or minister welfare—and of men; ancestors and such others as became distinguished either for evil or good, and so became objects of either love or dread. Imagination and tradition weave around them a mythical history; distance and obscurity invest them with qualities and attributes which are supposed to give them power over human weal or woe, and they become worshiped with rites which are supposed to appease or please them, and so to win their favor and protection. They are thus the outbirth of fear, love, want, and that yearning which every human soul feels for an object to worship. They explain nothing and are nothing. Polytheism is simply a corruption of a primitive and ineradicable religious instinct, which, in the absence of the true, creates its own object of worship.

It would not, however, be a just or logical conclusion that there is no truth mixed up with the mass of fable called Polytheism. We do not know, nor can it be known, what stray gleams of light shine in the Cimmerian darkness; what influences stir even in the abject heathen soul, as it lies prone before the altar of its false god. Sad and dreary as its lot is, some voices may yet come even to it with messages of love and peace;



its cry may reach the Ear that is forever open to the wail of sorrow, and its prayer offered to dumb idols, which can neither hear nor speak, may be heard by One who, though unknown, is all-knowing and all-merciful. The philosophy of polytheism is drawn in a few words by a master-hand: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever."\* As polytheism needs no refutation, so it admits of no defense. Its existence is proof of the reality of that great idea of which it is a corruption, even as its atrocious rites and enormities proclaim the depth of the degeneracy and moral fall which makes them possible.

*Atheism is one form of antitheistic thought.* Atheism has never had a national existence. In each age it has affected a few minds. The idea of a personal God is the theory commonly, almost universally, accepted by civilized and fairly developed men. It is even doubted whether any educated mind in normal condition dissents from its fundamental idea. But it is confessedly a theory which involves great and perplexing mysteries. The problem is vast and intricate, and the elements of the solution are obscure, and some of them incomprehensible to our finite faculties. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that some minds stand in doubt, and seek in other ways to explain

The theory of  
atheism.

\* Epistle to the Romans, i, 21-25.

the riddle, or, failing, settle down in blank denial. These take the name of *atheists* or *anti-theists*. As the name implies, the theory is a *negation*. It postulates there is no God, or, at least, there is no adequate proof of his existence; and it essays the solution of the problem of the cosmos without him.

Atheism assumes to arise mainly from the intellectual difficulties which are involved in the theory which postulates God. It is usually ascribed by theists to moral causes. It is looked upon as monstrous, and the atheist himself is detested as a "*monstrum horrendum*" almost, more than pitied as an erring brother. He is indeed in a sad predicament. Sad plight of the atheist. Either by a perverse choice into which he has somehow been inveigled, or by an unaccountable infirmity of reason, he has been led to surrender what, to most men, seems to be the most noble and exalting truth; and in the place of it has accepted a debasing error which is beset with incalculably greater difficulties than those he flees from; and, in the change, he has lost the respect and sympathy of his fellow-men: he is thus at once, by what appears to be a causeless and suicidal act, bereft of God, whom he denies, and deserted of men, who look upon him with an indefinable dread.

It is safe to say that atheism has its genesis both in the intellect and in the heart. There are real intellectual difficulties, and there are moral causes which exaggerate them and give them potency. Unconsciously the two causes work together; one is more conspicuous in one case, the other more obvious in the other case; but more or less they interblend in all atheistic thinking. If the moral causes were absent, the other ground of difficulty inherent in the subject, it is probable, would in most cases cease to be influential, or would be easily overcome.

The difficulties atheists flee from, as frequently rehearsed by themselves, are these: ( $\alpha$ ) they cannot conceive how there can



be an eternal being; (*b*) they cannot conceive of a creative act; (*c*) they cannot conceive a being that is not material; (*d*) they cannot conceive how goodness can be harmonized with the existence of evil; (*e*) they cannot believe in what they cannot comprehend; (*f*) they cannot believe in a being who creates men without their choice, and then punishes them forever for doing what, as they allege, he gave them a disposition to do; (*g*) finally, they sum up all the superstitions and mistakes of theologians which have cropped out along the ages of religious belief, and make these the ground of rejecting the whole as a mass of fables. They cut the tap-root at a stroke by denying God. It is easier, and on the whole more rational, they assume, to think there is no God, than to accept what seems to flow from the admission of his existence. It relieves the heart from an insupportable burden of anxiety, and delivers the world from the bondage of an intolerable despotism. Their main objection is to the Christian idea of God as moral governor of the universe as delineated, they allege, in the Bible and the writings of theologians. Were the teachings what their travesties make them, their atheism would not be without vindication, or, rather, would need none. The theory does not assume to rest on any great principles. It is not a belief which is enforced by positive reasons or deduced from known premises which establish it or require its acceptance; on the contrary, it begins and continues in the rejection of what, to most men, seem to be necessary truths. It is not a philosophy, but a negation. It furnishes no solution of the problem of the universe, meets no demand of the reason or the affections, but simply denies what the reason and the affections seem to require. That this is a true account of its origin will, we think, not be disputed by any one who has become acquainted with their so-called reasonings.

“Atheism,” says Flint, “is the rejection of belief in God.

It teaches either that there is no God, or that it is impossible for man to know that there is a God, or, that there is Flint on athe-  
ism. no sufficient reason for believing that there is a God.

In other words, it either absolutely denies that there is a divine being, or it denies that the human mind is capable of discovering whether or not there is a divine being, or it maintains that no valid proof of the existence of a divine being has been produced. Atheism in the form of a denial of the existence of a God has been called dogmatic atheism; atheism in the form of doubt of man's ability to ascertain whether there is a God or not has been called skeptical atheism; atheism in the form of mere rejection of the evidence which has been presented for the existence of a God may be called critical atheism. There is no individual system of atheism, however, which is exclusively dogmatic, exclusively skeptical, or exclusively critical. These terms express accurately only ideal distinctions which have never been exactly realized. Skeptical atheism and critical atheism are inseparable. A purely dogmatic atheism would be utterly incredible. Skeptical atheism and critical atheism have always been much more prevalent than dogmatic atheism. In every form—even in its most modest form—atheism pronounces all belief in God a delusion, and all religion a fable. What is called practical atheism is not a kind of thought or opinion, but a mode of life. It is living as if there were no God, whether we believe that there is a God or not.” \*

No theory can stand simply as a negation. A denial must, as much as an affirmation, justify itself. Disbelief, in the same manner and to the same extent as belief, is amena- Disbelief  
amenable to  
reason. ble to the adequate reason. The problem of the cosmos remains. No mere denial or refusal to consider it can brush it away. If there are facts which seem to require a God, the atheist must grapple with these facts and show how they can

\* “Antitheistic Theories,” p. 4.



be explained without him, or, failing, must admit that the theory of denial cannot support itself; that is, that it is without warrant of reason, or is irrational—a *fool's* theory. Either this, or he must be able positively to prove that there is no God, or show that there is no proof of the existence of God. If the problem seems to require God he must be admitted, unless positive proof can be adduced that he does not exist.

The demand which the atheist must meet, therefore, to justify his position, is either to establish by proof that there is no God, or to show that the problem does not require him. If he can do either of these, theism as a rational faith will be compelled to give way.

Dr. Chalmers has said on this point: "There being no ground for affirming that there is a God, is a different proposition from there being ground for affirming that there is no God. The former we apprehend to be the furthest amount of the atheistic verdict on the question of God. The atheist does not labor to demonstrate that there is no God:\* but he labors to demonstrate that there is no adequate proof of there being one. He does not positively affirm the position that God is not, but he affirms the lack of evidence for the position that God is. Judging from the tendency and effect of his argument, an atheist does not appear positively to refuse that a God may be, but he insists that he has not discovered himself, whether, by the utterance of his voice in audible revelation, or by the impress of his hand upon visible nature. His verdict on the doctrine of a God is only that it is not proven. It is not that it is disproven. He is an atheist. He is not an anti-theist. Now, there is one consideration which affords the in-

\* He is not required to do this in order to justify his unbelief. If he could demonstrate that position it would sweep away the need of considering any counter proof; but if he can only show that the point is not made out that there is a God, he justifies his withholding belief.

quirer a singularly clear and commanding position at the outset of this great question. It is this: We cannot, without a glaring contravention of all the principles of experimental philosophy, recede to a further distance from the doctrine of a God than to the principle of simple atheism. We do not need to take our departure from any period further back than this in the region of antitheism, for that region cannot possibly be entered by us but by an act of tremendous presumption, which it were premature to denounce as impious, but which we have the authority of all modern science for demanding as unphilosophical. We can figure a rigid Baconian mind of a cast so slow and cautious and hesitating as to demand more of proof ere it gives its conviction to the doctrine that there is absolutely and certainly a God. But, in virtue of these very attributes, would it, if a sincere and consistent mind, be at least equally slow in giving its conviction to the doctrine there is absolutely and certainly not a God? Such a mind would be in a state neither for assertion nor for denial upon this subject. It would settle in ignorance or unbelief, which is quite another thing from disbelief. The place it occupied would be some midway region of skepticism; and if it felt unwarranted [to assume] from any evidence before it that God is, it would at the very least feel equally unwarranted to affirm that God is not. To make this palpable we have only to contrast the two intellectual states, not of theism and atheism, but of theism and antitheism, along with the two processes by which alone we can be logically and legitimately led to them.

“To be able to say that there is a God, we may have only to look abroad on some definite territory and point to the vestiges that are given of his power and his presence somewhere. To be able to say that there is no God we must walk the whole expanse of infinity, and ascertain by observation that such vestiges are to be found nowhere. Grant that no trace of him can be



discerned in the quarter of contemplation which our puny optics have explored, does it follow that throughout all immensity a being with the essence and sovereignty of a God is nowhere to be found? Because through our loopholes of communication with that small portion of external nature which is before us we have not seen or ascertained a God, must we, therefore, conclude of every unknown and untrodden vastness in this illimitable universe that no deity is there? or because, through the brief succession of our little day, these heavens have not once broken silence, is it therefore for us to speak to all the periods of that eternity which is behind us, and to say that never hath God come forth with the unequivocal tokens of his existence? Ere we can say that there is a God we must have seen on that portion of nature to which we have access the prints of his footsteps, or have had direct intimations from himself, or been satisfied by the authentic memorials of his converse with our species in other days. But ere we can say that there is no God we must have roamed over all nature, and seen that no mark of a divine footstep was there; and we must have gotten intimacy with every existent spirit in the universe, and learned from each that never did a revelation from the deity visit him; and we must have searched, not into the records of our solitary planet, but into the archives of all worlds, and therein gather that throughout the wide realms of immensity not one exhibition of a reigning and living God ever has been made. Atheism might plead a lack of evidence within its own field of observation. But antitheism pronounces both upon the things which are and the things which are not within that field. It breaks forth and beyond all these limits that have been prescribed to man's excursive spirit by the sound philosophy of experience, and by a presumption the most tremendous, even the usurpation of all space and of all time, it affirms that there is no God. To make this out we should need to travel abroad

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over the surrounding universe till we had exhausted it, and to search backward through all the hidden recesses of eternity; to travel in every direction the plains of infinitude, and sweep the outskirts of that space which is itself interminable, and then bring back to this little world of ours the report of a universal blank wherein we had not met with one manifestation or one movement of a presiding God. *For man not to know of a God he has only to sink below the level of our common nature, but to deny him he must be a god himself.* He must arrogate the ubiquity and omniscience of the Godhead." \*

On the same point John Foster says: "The wonder turns on the great processes by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know there is no God. John Foster on the being of God. What ages and what lights are necessary for this attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a deity by which even he could be overpowered. If he does not absolutely know every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that agent may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one that he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things—that is, precludes another deity by being one himself—he cannot know that the being whose existence he rejects does not exist."

\* Chalmers's Works, "Natural Theology," vol. i, pp. 58-62.



Since, then, the atheist cannot know that there is no God, and since it is impossible for him to establish it by proof of any kind, the denial is found to be without reason —a baseless negation. It remains that we inquire now what disposition he can make of the facts of the problem which, by others, are supposed to indicate a God. Can he so explain them as to justify his doubt? If not, his doubt will prove as irrational as his denial.

The universe is. The fact he cannot dispute. The universe comprises either matter and mind, or matter alone. Take either view he may, he must account for its existence. How does he account for it? Will he assume that it is eternal? either that or he must admit that at some time it began to be. If he should say it is eternal, he must mean that it is eternal coexisting mind and matter, or that either mind or matter began to be. If he accept the alternative that both mind and matter are eternal, he admits the essential element of theism —the eternity of mind. If he fall back upon sheer materialism, and assert that matter alone exists, he must find in matter the adequate explanation of all phenomena. His position must then be that the material cosmos alone exists, and is eternal. By this he must mean either it is eternal as it now is, or it is an eternally changing form with an eternally changeless substance. If he take the alternative that it is eternal in its present form, he encounters this difficulty; (a) that its present form—and by form we mean order—cannot be eternal for the reason that it is an order of succession, the integrants of which are all temporary, and it is impossible to raise to *unbegunness* an aggregate every part of which had a beginning; the race of men, for example, cannot be an eternal race, because no individual of it is eternal, and because by the addition of individuals each one of whom began to be he cannot get into the result some one or a whole that did not begin to be. The present order, therefore, cannot be

A quandary for  
the materialist.

eternal. This absolute impossibility stands in the way of his assumption that the universe, as it now exists, is eternal. (b) Geological science also proves that there was a beginning to the present order. Driven from this position, the atheist must now assume that changeless matter has existed eternally, or that perpetual change has existed from eternity; that is, he must hold that changeless being or substance is eternal, without mutation of form, or that the changeless substance has been running a round of endless changes of form, now appearing in one formal arrangement and then in another, of which the present form of the universe is one of a perpetual flow, or one of an endless series. But this supposition encounters the difficulty already referred to. Every change implies a beginning—it is a change from a previous state. But it is impossible by adding a series of changes or beginnings together to reach the unbeginning. It is the contradiction that that which begins and that which does not begin are identical. This idea, then, of an eternal universe made up of perpetual change must be abandoned as contradictory and therefore impossible.

The last alternative for the atheist is, that matter itself is eternal, and is the adequate ground of all the changes of form which it has assumed. This theory assumes that the ultimates of matter existed from eternity, but in a formless and inert or perfectly quiescent and changeless state, and at a time commenced motion and action of some kind, and the visible cosmos is the result. But this supposition has to explain how that which was from eternity without change began to evolve, and how that which was without mind evolved an orderly cosmos which implies mind, and how it evolved mind itself.

I subjoin a few quotations which show how those difficulties are attempted to be met by the greatest minds who lean toward atheism; or, whose theories do so tend.

Tyndall says: "Matter is not the mere empty capacity



which philosophers have pictured her to be, but the universal mother, who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb. . . . And believing, as I do, in the continuity of nature, I cannot stop abruptly where our microscopes cease to be of use. Here the vision of the mind authoritatively supplements the vision of the eye. By a necessity engendered and justified by science I cross the boundary of experimental evidence, and discern in that matter which we, in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence of its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium the promise and potency of all terrestrial life." It is a quotation from Bruno, but approved and accepted by Tyndall in his Belfast address.

Haeckel also talks very much in the same way in his preface to the "History of Creation." He, quotes Bruno to the effect that "A spirit exists in all things, and no body is so small but it contains a part of the divine substance within itself by which it is animated." He also quotes Goethe's remark, that "matter can never exist and be active without mind." And he adds, "All bodies are equally animated; wherever there is corporeal substance there is also mental power." The statement is monistic—matter and mind are identical.

Similarly, Clifford says: "The molecules of matter, though devoid of mind, possess a small piece of mind-stuff." He argues that when the material particles thus charged are combined in complex ways the atomic particles of mind-stuff that go along with them become likewise similarly combined, and the result is feeling, thought, self-consciousness, personality. The mind as we know it has been built up out of the elementary mental atoms which accompany the elementary atoms of matter. Consciousness is just a combination of molecules which are individually unconscious.\*

\* From Professor Momerie's "Belief in God," pp. 26-28.

Of this theory Professor Momerie says, p. 18: "Materialists differ very much in opinion as to what matter really is, but they are all agreed that in itself, that is to say in its elementary constituents, it is destitute of sensation and thought. Intelligence only arises when the unintelligent atoms combine in certain complex ways. In the beginning there was no mind; there was nothing but empty space and senseless atoms. And in the end there will be no mind; it will cease to be with the dissolution of those complex material combinations to which it owes its existence. Mind is but a transitory appearance in the eternal evolution of matter; that is, it is phenomenon, not an entity."

Momerie's  
statement.

"Now any plausibility which materialism possesses, you will find to be entirely due to the vagueness of the language in which it is explained. The statements of materialists, as soon as one reflects upon them, turn out to be contradictory and absurd. Not only is their doctrine incapable of accounting for the facts of experience, but it is absolutely incompatible with them. If materialism were true, our experience would be different; or rather, we should have no experience at all. From senseless atoms and empty space our minds could never have been produced. Materialists often speak as if thoughts were identical with neural processes. The brain secretes thought, it has been said, just as the liver secretes bile. Ideas are in reality material things. . . .

"Again, materialists very often confuse the physical organs of perception with the mental faculties which perceive. . . . To explain the unity of experience, materialists often resort to another false identification of things which are totally distinct. Not only are thoughts confused with neural processes, and the physical organs of sense with the mental faculties of perceptions, but very frequently the brain is spoken of as if it were the mind or soul. The sense of personal identity, it is said,



may be accounted for by the unity of the brain. (There is no such unity.) . . .

Tyndall himself says: "The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granting that a definite thought and a definite molecular action occur in the brain simultaneously, we do not possess the intellectual organ which would enable us to pass by a process of reasoning from the one phenomenon to the other." \*

Tyndall's testimony.

"Even Büchner occasionally admits as much as this, though generally he writes like a thorough-paced materialist. He believes that thought and the soul have arisen from the combination of material atoms. Yet he distinctly declares that they are not themselves material. We do not know, he says, how spirit can be defined as any thing else than as something immaterial in itself, excluding matter as opposed to it. Professor Bain advocates a doctrine which he has called 'guarded or qualified materialism, and which will, he thinks, preserve the fundamental distinction.' †

Views of Büchner and of Bain.

"A similar dualism (coupled with the charge of anthropomorphism) is frequently urged against natural theology at the present day. The alternative proposed has been called monism. The fixed, unyielding realm of abiology (inorganic nature) is taken as the type of the universe. The sole supposable divine principle (or spirit) is identified with its law, which is in turn pronounced identical with philosophical necessity—that is to say, a necessity which annihilates the possibility of all will. The divine principle thus supposed is simply that law or force which is embodied in the mechanism of the universe. Professor Haeckel, of Jena, is the author of a book which has been styled in Germany, 'The Bible of Darwinism.' The

\* Address before the British Association in 1868.

† Professor Momerie's "Belief in God," pp. 18-24.

following passages will show how he treats the subject under consideration in the text. He writes to the following effect :

“ ‘The conception of creation is either altogether unimaginable, or at least perfectly inconsistent with that pure intuition of nature founded on an empirical basis. In abi-  
Haeckel's  
views.  
 ology a creation is no longer anywhere spoken of at all, and it is in biology only that people are still closely wrapped up in this error. The conception of creation is perfectly unimaginable, if by it is understood the origination of something out of nothing. This acceptance is quite incompatible with one of the first and chiefest of nature's laws—one, indeed, universally acknowledged, namely, with the great law that *all matter is eternal*.’\* ”

“Now if the conception of such an immaterial force discoverable exterior to matter, independent of yet nevertheless acting upon it, is absolutely inadmissible and inconceivable in itself, then so, too, becomes the conception of a creative power from our point of view ; and all the more so since with it are united the most untenable teleological conceptions and the most palpable anthropomorphism.” . . . “In all these teleological conceptions, and similarly in all histories of creation which the poetical phantasy of men has produced, gross anthropomorphism is so evident that we may leave the denial of this creation-idea to the insight of any general reader who thinks for himself, and is not too far involved in traditional prejudices.” . . . “A creation of organism is, therefore, partly or quite unimaginable, partly in such complete contradiction to all knowledge of nature empirically gained that we cannot, in any case, allow ourselves to end by accepting this hypothesis. There remains, consequently, nothing else but to suppose a spontaneous origination of the simplest organisms, from which all more perfect

\* “Generelle Morphologie der Organismen,” book ii, chapter vi, section 2, “On Creation.”



ones developed themselves by gradual metamorphoses; that is to say, a self-forming or self-configuration of matter into organization, which is generally called primordial production or spontaneous generation (*generatio æquivoca*).” \*

Haeckel commences his section upon dualism and monism † with the following quotation from August Schleicher:

“The tendency of modern thought is undeniably toward monism. Dualism, whether you are pleased to define it as the contrast of spirit and nature, of contents and form, of appearance and reality, is no longer a firm ground to stand upon, if we wish to survey the field of modern science.

“To the latter there is no matter without spirit (that is, without the unavoidable necessity that governs it), nor, on the other hand, is there any spirit without matter. We might say, perhaps, that there is neither matter nor spirit in the usual acceptation of the words, but only a something which is the one and the other at the same time. To charge this view with materialism is equally as unjust as to lay it at the door of spiritualism.” ‡

“Haeckel concludes this section by avowing an unalterable conviction of the truth of monism, with which his mind is thoroughly penetrated.” §

The ancient theory of the eternity of matter and motion, and that they were the cause of all things, is identical with the modern and current theory of matter and force as the cause of all cosmic phenomena. The doctrine of the correlation of the forces and the conservation of energy, while it seems to teach plurality of the forces, really resolves all force into a mode of motion,

Old theory of  
eternity of mo-  
tion, and new  
theory of mat-  
ter and force,  
identical.

\* Professor Momerie's "Belief in God."

† Book i, cap. iv, sec. 6.

‡ "Die Darwinische Theorie und die Sprachwissenschaft." Weimar, 1863, p. 8.

§ Jackson's "Philosophy of Natural Theology."

or tendency to motion. The theory is, that from eternity has existed an infinite number of ultimate atoms of matter, monads, infinitesimal points, force-centers. Infinite cannot be used with scientific accuracy, since an infinite number is a strict contradiction; for it is of the essence of number that it consists of units, and may be always increased indefinitely or diminished to units; and it is of the essence of infinity that it can neither be increased nor divided. There is and can be no infinite number. The theory, then, means that there is a countless multitude, a practically infinite number of atoms which are indestructible, and, therefore, eternal; can neither be increased nor diminished; have forever existed, do now, and will forever exist. That each of these atoms, with relation to every other, is a center of force, which in the last meaning is a tendency to motion, and in fact a mode of action on contiguous force centers or atoms.

The theory of the eternity of matter and force, and that the universe is the outcome of interaction without intelligence to guide, merely one of the infinite series of possible collocations occurring in the eternity past, which is a popular form of materialism in our day—evolutionism in its ultimate ripest form—the doctrine as formulated by one of its most lauded high-priests, that matter has in it the promise and potency of all past changes and all possibilities of change in the future, and that no other agent is required to account for the universe, has in it many insuperable difficulties; not only taxing credulity beyond any former escapade of unreasoning absurdity, but postulating absolute impossibilities.

The theory concedes that the universe is intelligible, and boasts that it has at last found the true interpretation of it—reduced it to its true thought-form; at the same time it denies that it expresses thought: that is, it is full of meaning, but its meaning is offspring not of intelligence but accident. But,



great as this absurdity is, it is not its chief difficulty. Still let us not pass from this without taking its measure.

It postulates as the only primitive forms of existence, matter and force. Force it defines to be a something pertaining to, or inherent in, or co-existing with, matter, which is the ground or cause of interaction; or, a mode of motion by which the primitive, infinitesimal molecules or particles of matter, in some way become united, or formulate themselves into new and ever varying collocations. It denies, to begin with, that there was any such thing as intelligence or mind existing, either as force or matter, or as the two combined, either in the atoms or forces, causing their interaction or movement among themselves, and determining their collocations. The resulting collocations, therefore, by its postulates, have no significance of intelligence, either as caused by or indicative of mind.

It posits that in process of infinite time these associate factors, alone and of themselves, that is, matter and force, most primitively massed the particles into sidereal systems—world collocations; in which the interplay of the forces became so balanced and harmonious that henceforth their interaction tended to fixity, permanence, but without any thought of doing so. Lawless hitherto, they now became subject to law, and worked henceforth to a rule which evolved and conserved order and regularity. Thus established, order, by their unintelligent interaction, rose out of chaos, law out of lawlessness, as to the vast collocations now known as the world systems. These became so fixed as to their segregations, relations, and movements among themselves, and their special and individualized harmonies, that no future disturbances or disruptions of these vast harmonies can be ever again possible. But all this was without thought, and the result was wholly unintended.

Then ensued an infinite period during which simple changes

occurred in the inorganic elements, resulting in recompositions and decompositions and varying collocations, but which did not affect the stability of the world systems.

There was yet no organic existence, and no mind or any thing to indicate intelligence of any kind—merely the rhythmic motions of worlds revolving in space. But there had come to be a permanent condition of beautiful and harmonious order. The unpurposing forces had gained so much on the backlying infinite and eternal chaos. In this new and unintended order, the solar mass assumed its fixed place in the vast abysm—a globe of fire radiating thermal and luminiferous rays over almost limitless regions of space: the globe of the earth, our future home, condensed from flaming vapor into its present dimensions, and incrustated with a solid refrigerated shell, now made its annual revolution around the far-distant solar center, and diurnal rotations around its own axis, in measures of time never more to vary: the enveloping atmosphere assumed its changeless volume, consistency, and form: the foundations of the world were laid: exhaled vapors from seething seas filled and floated in the air, returning in showers to cool the face of the fevered world: the crystalline surface, reduced in temperature and decomposed by attrition and the elements, formed into soft and pliable earthy deposits: mountains were reared by internal congestions of the pent-up fires: paths for rivers and ocean beds were dug: the descending floods, no longer instantly vaporized, rushed along their crystal paved and walled channels, and gathered into fathomless and measureless seas: the azoic world turned its dead surfaces to a lifeless sun: ages, how long no arithmetic can calculate, the unmeaning pageant continued its rhythmic round of magnificence, with no mind anywhere to contemplate it, and no intelligence to order it—a dead world from no whence and tending to no whither; a dreary splendor of order from a yet more

As yet no organic life developed by the atoms.



dreary eternity of chaos rolled its meaningless history without a chronicler, along the corridors of measureless duration.

But there came, at last, a time when the dead world somehow awoke to life. The beginnings of the new age were feeble and low, but it was a new age and full of potency—demanding only sufficient time for the most wonderful results. Like the preceding aeons, its paternity was mere matter and force—interaction and change. Former interactions had elaborated conditions favorable to the new possibilities. They were not purposed or pre-conceived conditions, for that would imply mind; but by a strange happening they were not simply possible or even favoring, but absolutely necessary conditions. Out of them life arose. It was a new force; that is, a force not original to matter. During all the preceding infinite ages it had not appeared. It was impossible that it should during the continuous reign of the fire mist, or further on during aeons in which worlds were but molten globes, or further on yet during the time of condensation and refrigeration, when their surfaces were undergoing the disturbing convulsions of the metamorphic time—aeons so vast as to bewilder the imagination. All admit that it was a new and essentially unique force. How it arose is confessedly an inscrutable mystery. There is no attempt to account for it. Only so much as this is known: that its advent seems to have been simultaneous throughout the globe. The transition was sudden. In a moment the dead earth was impregnated with life; her fecund womb filled with countless infinitesimal seeds, or germs of things that were henceforth to grow and flourish on the pap which her dead breast was destined to furnish. These microscopic centers of force commenced evolving the organic world at first in low, simple, and insensate types. As the infinite ages lapsed they, however, took on higher forms, and passed from insensate vegetable to highly sensitive animal organisms. Or if by possibility two differentiable types arose at different

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periods, one sensate and the other insensate, it was still by interminable evolutions that it has reached its present status—the original ova containing all the conditions of the development, only requiring sufficient time. As yet all this was the happenings of unintelligent forces. Mind was still non-existent. There was nowhere thought, purpose, will, or consciousness or hint of mentality; simply the endless interplay of matter and force evolving the wondrous series—complexes of matter, and nothing more, but in an ever-ascending order.

Finally, at the top, as yet, of what may be called the organic aeon, the reign of life, extending to the present as the outcome of evolutionary processes beginning with the primal ova or seeds, and passing upward along the ever-developing types of life—after lapse of infinite ages man, as yet the crowning type, made his appearance!

Through all the aeons past, up to the date of man's advent, there not only appears to have been no hint of mind, but according to the theory we are simply stating it is absolutely certain there was no such thing as mind: only matter and force—a mode of motion and nothing more—existed. Through all that back-lying history of change and upward evolution, even on through the age of life, the entire of the ever-shifting, ever-advancing series, the only factors were matter and unintelligent force. No change represented any thought, for there was as yet no thought or thinker. Thought and thinker were yet unevolved. They were potentially present in the fire-mist, we are told, for that “contained the promise and potency of the ever-progressing evolution;” but they had not yet made their advent.

Ultimately the factors evolved man. Among his furnishings, along with a unique form and more highly developed organism, attained by “the survival of the fittest,” he was equipped with a special outfit of more highly refined nerve substance; greatly intensifying his sensitivity.

The human age.

Evolvment of man.



The locus of this new endowment was in a cranial cavity specially prepared for it. Within this cavity was posited an improved, highly refined, and enlarged nerve-focus—the cerebrum, commonly known as the brain; a highly convoluted mass of matter surcharged with a peculiar force and capacity of interaction which took on the form of self-cognition. In this mysterious cave mind was born—or more accurately, *the deposit was mind*. Mind thus made was not something different from the highly convoluted matter—a new and differential kind of substance; for there never was, and never will be, any thing but matter and force. But this new collocation of matter and force was able to produce, by their interaction, what are known as mental phenomena; that is, the convolution of matter did not think, but it secreted thought, volitional freedom, self-consciousness, and those modes of motion which men call mind: in fact, it was the cerebrum and nothing more; thought, self-consciousness, being simple cerebration or brain motion. Knowledge, idea, belief, volition, imagination, reason, understanding, self-consciousness, are secretions of the gelatinous mass when it is agitated. The thing secreted is the human *ego*—what men call the soul, that is, a series of mental phenomena. When the brain decomposes, the secretions cease and the phenomena that is the *ego* disappears. This cerebral mass cerebrates God, the idea of cause, of the good, the beautiful, the true, the ought. It is the universal author, inventor, framer of laws, constitutions, religions; it secretes heroes and martyrs and philanthropists. It knows the past and speculates of the future, the necessary, the possible, the contingent, the certain. It declares I will and I will not, and affirms its freedom to this or that, or neither. It plans, devises, executes, suspends, modifies, renounces at will. It doubts, disbelieves, deceives, denies—is cunning, curious, conceited, confiding, contemptuous. It de-

liberates schemes, contrives methods, aims at results, discovers mistakes, mends them, starts on a new tack. It remembers, dreams, laughs, weeps, breaks its heart; is solemn, gay, thoughtful, serious—cracks jokes, is humorous, enjoys its own conceits. That which does all this is simply that pulpy, unconscious gelatinous mass. All so-called mental phenomena are, after all, phenomena of mere matter; the sole factor of thought is a monad or molecule, or collocation of brain cells, and so of all other phenomena which we ascribe to mind.

This is the theory of the universe put forward with grave insistence by lauded and much be-praised leaders in the school of modern thought—the latest outcome of cerebral secretions. Has reason fled to brutish beasts, that men should be enticed by such inanities of fancy?

It becomes us to be patient when we deal with men who attempt to search into the mysteries which invest the origin of the universe. The foregoing theory certainly fails to help us, and though ushered with parade of much learning, it is beset with insurmountable difficulties. It is no fault of ours if its statement arrays it with cap and bells. Itself is responsible.

Its single substance of truth is in its postulate that the ground of the universe is eternal. When it inquires for this it stumbles at every step, and falls into inextricable contradictions and impossible assumptions. Though it The one truth of materialism. may not seem to be necessary, after simply stating the theory, I will yet be at the pains of pointing out some of these insurmountable obstacles; not obstacles merely, but essential inclusions of the theory, which show not only that it probably is not true, but that it is impossible it should be true. Its most zealous advocates, and certainly most learned supporters, confess to real difficulties—parts that admit of no explanation on their theory. The unwarranted assumptions of the theory are



such as to render it irrational and inadmissible; and its contradictions such as to make its truth impossible. These are fatal grounds against it.

If it were true that matter is a mass of inert substance—absolutely motionless and inactive—the fact of its existence at one time, in the absence of all knowledge of its having ever begun to exist, might furnish a plausible ground for affirming that it probably may have always existed. The contrary could not be shown. Nor would the fact at all help to explain the origin of cosmic phenomena. As a fact it would not embarrass theism, nor would it lend any support to materialistic atheism, since its conceded inertia—voidness of force—would leave it barren of explanation of cosmic order. The only service it would render to mind in investigating cosmic phenomena would be, to eliminate the question of its own origin, that is, the origin of inert substance.

But if matter is to be conceived as something active, either as a something into whose essence force enters, a mere cluster of force centers, or a mass of substance, which by virtue of its existence necessarily acts, evolving changes within itself, then the supposition of its eternity involves a contradiction and becomes impossible. This is the position which the materialism of to-day holds, and which it must hold, to be of any avail to the question of the origin of cosmic phenomena.

The ground for asserting the impossibility of the truth of the theory is this: namely, all change implies a beginning; That which is eternal cannot change. the coming to pass of something which was not; but to assert the eternity of a necessarily acting force issuing in internal changes of the subject, or external changes of any kind, is an absolute contradiction; the eternal cannot be made up of beginnings. One of the terms excludes the other. Thus the first and fatal objection to the theory is found in its postulate; not alone in the fact that it is a groundless assump-

tion, nor yet in the fact that it appears to be irrational, but in the deeper ground that it is self-subversive.

Since this objection absolutely overthrows the whole theory by removing its foundation, it might not be important to indicate other difficulties equally destructive of it; but it may, nevertheless, be useful and helpful to truth in its present struggles to point out some of these—the more fundamental.

The fact of objections to a theory is not necessarily fatal to it, since there is no theory against which objections may not be raised; nor is it necessary that the defenders of a theory should be able to render a complete answer to all objections. Objections may even exist which are real, not simply unanswerable, and yet the theory for substance be still held as generally tenable. The objection in such a case lies against some non-essential incident or accident of a theory, which may be corrected without damage to the theory itself—this frequently occurs. Some facts will not admit of explanation; they must be accepted as mysteries. All theories of the universe are beset with such difficulties.

But such are not the obstacles to the theory under examination. Its very essence is false. It must be rejected, not because of some incidental blunders in it, nor yet because of inexplicable parts of its inclusions, or its postulates; but because it is impossible and self-destructive, as shown above.

The second fatal objection to this theory is, that it requires that unintelligent action shall be indistinguishable from intelligent action; that an unintelligent necessary force shall be able to attain precisely the same result as can be reached by an intelligent free power. As a consequence of this blunder, the cause that it alleges is no cause of the effect produced, which is in contradiction of one of the most fundamental intuitions of the mind; namely, that there can be no effect without an adequate cause. It does not differ

Unintelligent  
action distin-  
guishable from  
intelligent.



essentially as an explanation of the order of the inorganic universe and of the origin of life and mind, as displayed in the organic universe and man, from the ancient theory of chance.

Of the origin of life it gives no account. It admits that life is. It calls it a force. It does not even pretend that it is a primitive force—one of the original and permanent existences back of change. It admits that it is not; that even the stuff which manufactures it—for it agrees that it is a manufactured or developed something—did not exist primarily. It ascribes its origin to dead matter and unliving force. Its advocates generally admit that only life now propagates life. But few believers in the theory admit that they hold to the doctrine of spontaneous generation. Yet it postulates that all life rose out of death, or non-living factors; that is, that it was made by factors which it constantly asserts are incapable of producing it. It asserts that the dead factors, which primitively made it, immediately after that originating act ceased to produce it, and have never since repeated the achievement, and cannot. It admits that the ova or seeds were a manufactured article; that matter and unliving force made them, and imparted to them what neither of them separately possessed; that is, that they evolved more than their joint contents held; that the evolution exceeded the involution by the diameter of infinite difference. At the same time it asserts that it is impossible that evolution should ever transcend involution; that only that can be imparted which is possessed. These are the contradictions of the theory as to the origin of life.

Its theory of the development of organisms is explicit. It holds that the manufactured ova, or seeds, were not at first differentiable germs of diverse types of things which they were empowered to evolve, but similar germs, potential of all possible types. That out of them, by slow process of ever-advancing order, all types have been evolved; and that this

was the power imparted to them by their factors: a power which had descended from the fire mist to be invested in them, and henceforth in them alone.

The theory admits an inexplicable change in the mode of propagating life. There was something in the first factured ova which somehow developed, in the organisms which they evolved, inexplicable arrangements for the continuance of the stream of life after a new method; a mode henceforth to be permanent and changeless. The old law of a living germ from dead matter disappeared, and a new law arose, and life from life became the law forever, and like from like became the fixed rule. The theory attempts no explanation of this riddle—seems wholly unconscious that it is an embarrassing obstacle.

According to the theory the modes of interaction among atoms are various, but perfectly fixed and permanent. The atoms are different, and affect each other differently; but atoms of the same kind, in similar circumstances, always affect each other in the same way. The various modes in which atoms affect each other, according to invariable laws, manifest inhering forces or tendencies. They are known as gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity, magnetism, electricity, light, heat, etc. Gravitation is realized tendency to motion, so of all the rest. Force tending to motion, motion and atoms, are all that exist, and these have existed forever. Nothing more, it is assumed, is necessary to account for present or past or future cosmic phenomena.

The substance of all things is found in the atom; all forms are traceable to mutual impingings or influences of some kind, which issue in motion. There is an eternal flux. Each new relation is the ground of another which immediately and necessarily emerges. In the endless movement, infinite possibilities are contained; all possible outcomes may some time occur. The present form of the universe is one of the possible series and requires no other cause. There is no reason to inter-



ject design, or purpose, or creative agency anywhere along the endless and forever varying chain. As the fragments in the revolving kaleidoscope assume ever new forms, forever vanishing and forever becoming, so the universe forever is, and forever vanishes out of one form into another!

Now, this view is perfectly intelligible. So much must be said in its favor. It is not confused nor hard to understand. There is but one fault with it; that is, it is impossible. It has, however, elements of truth in it, and is instinct with deeper truth than it affirms. It recognizes the eternity of being, but mislocates it. It intuits eternal cause, but misses its source and mode of action. Its failure is, that it stops short of the ultimate, and becomes impossible in its conclusion. It affirms with truth that the material universe is a complex of an indefinite number of atomic entities, which are indestructible as to any power they possess for self-immolation or mutual destruction of each other. They are rooted in existence and do not pass away. It affirms with truth that these atomic entities are individualized centers of force, by which the material form of the cosmos is evolved. It affirms truly that the interaction is uniform and according to a fixed law. It affirms truly that motion is the invariable concomitant of the atoms, which is only saying that interaction is the law of their existence. They who hold the theory affirm truly, therefore, when they affirm that the cosmos is the outcome of the primordial atoms and their necessary interaction, but they fall short of the truth in failing to add that the atoms and the interacting forces are themselves outcomes of eternal mind.

The mistake of the theory is double: (a) first in *limiting* the universe to the *material complex*, or to the outcome of the atoms and their interplay; (b) second, in ascribing self-existence or eternity to the atoms, and the forces of which they are the center.

Mistakes of this theory.

We take them up in the reverse order, considering the second mistake first. The theory postulates the eternity of the atoms as force centers, and evolves the cosmic forms from them. If the postulates were true—that is, if the atoms were eternal, self-existent, and if the tendencies in them to action, which is another name for inhering forces, were also of them in their self-existence, just as we find them—they would account for the universe up to a certain point without any extra material agency. All cosmic forms below life and mind might find in them a plausible explanation. But were the postulate permissible, even then two difficulties would remain; (a) the force centers or atoms would have to take on the qualities of mind in so far as they act to ends which imply purpose or design; and (b), as we shall see, there would still remain certain cosmic facts which cannot be traced to action of the natural forces. These points will be developed at another stage of the discussion.

But the fault with the theory is in the postulate that the atoms as force are eternal—self-existent. This is denied on the ground that it involves a contradiction, and is, therefore, impossible to thought and impossible in fact, as has been shown. The denial is not that the material atoms are eternal. The furthest point to which we can go in that direction is to affirm that there is no proof that the atoms are eternal. It is not an intuitive certainty that they are not eternal. It is a necessary truth that there should be some eternal being: but there is nothing in the atoms themselves, or in any known facts, that requires that they should be that some eternal being. If it should so turn out that they are, reason is cognizant of no ground which requires it. But, be this as it may, it is not the point of our denial, and if their eternity were guaranteed it would not offset the point we make against the theory—that the atoms, as force centers, cannot be eternal;

Atoms not  
proved to be  
eternal.



therefore, if they should turn out to be eternal, they could not be such atoms as do exist or as the theory requires. It would be necessary to count out of them the quality which we call force, or tendency to act, or which makes them move on each other. Action must be eliminated. If the atoms are conceived as existing they must exist in a state of eternal inertness or quiescence—exist together without action of any kind upon each other—without producing any cosmic phenomena. They would in that case be self-existent atoms, but they would not be the adequate ground for cosmic phenomena; for, to manifest these, these eternally inert quiescent atoms would have to take on what was not included in their self-existence, namely, motion toward and action upon each other. For this we should have to find some adequate cause out of the atoms themselves; that is, there would have to be, besides these eternal motionless monads, an eternal being who could impart motion to them and cause them to interact; and so from this second eternal being would have to emanate these very forces which evolve the cosmic phenomena. The atoms, therefore, in themselves would account for nothing, and the theory which makes them account for every thing is shown to be utterly false or inadequate.

But how does it appear that the forces cannot be eternal, or that the atoms could only exist as inactive? This has been  
 How this is shown. fully shown already, but we repeat the proof. To the action of the forces all cosmic changes are ascribed. The forces are forces only as they produce changes. They are conceded not to exist without action. But all action which emerges in effects must necessarily fall within time. It is of the essence of effect that it is the existence of that which did not before exist. If the energy which produces the effect could not be active without producing it, which is conceded, the forces themselves as active must necessarily take on them the

temporal quality of the effects which they produce ; that is, there must be a time when they become active, prior to which they did not act ; they cannot therefore have been eternally active. But if we assume that the effects existed as mere latent potentialities in the atomic matter from eternity, we must abandon the postulate that the forces necessarily act, since the assumption is they did exist without action from eternity. And it cannot be pretended that they existed and awaited proper condition for action, since this would imply that the proper conditions would be some change in the relations of the atoms ; but such change in their relations would require some action to produce it, which would still fall within time. The result is, that the active energy which emerges in cosmic effects must have existed in some being who possessed the power to withhold its action, and also spontaneously and freely to set it in action.

The only possible attempt at an answer is to assume the possibility of an eternal regression ; but this is a contradiction, since regression is regression along a line of beginnings, and the eternal is the unbegun. It is impossible by any regress to bridge the difference and distance between the unbegun and the begun, or to attain to the unbegun by any summation of beginnings. This is not simply a proof that the theory may not be true, but it is a strict demonstration that it cannot be true.

The second false assumption in the postulate is, that it limits not only the cosmos to matter and inhering force, but existence itself. The proof already adduced, <sup>The second false assumption.</sup> establishing their inadequacy, is proof of something else. If it were allowed, as we have seen it cannot be, that the atoms as force-centers were self-existent, they would still be inadequate to meet all the demands of the problem. For while they would account for some of the phenomena they would not account for all. The combined effect of the action



of those forces, which by assumption are self-existent in the atoms or with the atoms, is the highest mental manifestation conceivable; but mind is not an inherence of the atoms. If we postulate it of the atoms, each atom must have an adequacy for the whole mental result, so that there are an infinite number of minds, or as many minds as atoms, practically working as one mind: or if not that, each atom must constitute an atomic quantity of mind, which, by union with all other atoms, becomes one great mind; but this is absurd. The proof is, that there is no mentality in the atoms; but the operative force shows mind, and, therefore, the proof is of eternal mind apart from the atoms, which, acting in them, is the force in all its forms which moves and guides them so as to produce the phenomena, which are mental. This, added to the fact already established, that the force cannot be eternally active, and was, therefore, set into action, not of necessity but freely, is proof positive that a mental cause both of the atoms and forces is the inevitable conclusion of reason.

But this becomes still more apparent if we consider the phenomena of life and of mind itself. There is not only the manifestation of mind in the cosmos, as the eternal constructive force thereof, but the constructive force also emerges in the origination of the entire phenomena of life in its lower forms, and of the entity of mind itself. To assume that any natural force or forces are adequate to these effects is simply bald and groundless assertion, for which there is not only no evidence, but abundant proof to the contrary.

To the question, Whence came the universe? atheism is unable to return any answer other than that which has just been examined and shown to be not simply improbable, but impossible, in its implications. To the theistic argument it returns no reply showing that the argument is weak or inadequate at any point. It is a denial against proof, without being

able to show any ground for the denial. It removes no difficulty. The alleged embarrassments which beset the theistic theory, on the grounds of which it withholds assent, it fails entirely to escape by its negative position. Meantime, helping nothing, its absurdity insults reason, outrages the affections, introduces anarchy into the social structure, abolishes moral law, overthrows human responsibility, freedom, and immortality, and brutalizes man with no other ground than denial.

Its denial is not confined to the denial of God. By inevitable implication it denies mind, it denies cause, it denies freedom, it denies right and wrong, it denies accountability except to the usurped power of a tyrant fellow-mortal, it denies a survival after death, it denies the religious instincts—there is no ground of truth in any of these, on its theory. It denies that there is any purpose in any thing, that there is any skill in the formation of things, that any thing which exists shows any thought back of it, that any thing was made for any end, the eye for seeing or the ear for hearing, or any thing whatever for any purpose. It affirms that matter is all, that the universe had no maker, that man is nothing but a body, that man's intuition of his personality is a lie, that his affirmation of freedom is a lie, that his distinction between right and wrong is a lie, that his conscience is a lie, that a moral universe is a lie, that the idea that there is any thing more than we see and handle is groundless.

Blackie thus trenchantly puts the difficulty of the theory:

“The maintenance of the atheistic theory necessarily implies one of three things: Either that effects can be produced without a cause; or that a system of rea-  
 sonable effects can be produced without a rea-  
 sonable cause; or that the system of effect which we call the world is essentially unreasonable, and therefore does not proceed from a reasonable source. Now of these three

Blackie's view  
of the atheistic  
theory.



atheistic propositions the negative of the first is of the nature of the postulate of all sane minds; and the wretched cavil about invariable sequence, which David Hume introduced, and John Stuart Mill made fashionable for a day, will no more do away with the idea of causality in the great mass of normally constituted minds, than the assertion that the regular going up and down of a piston in a cylinder renders the supposition of a constructive reason in the person of James Watt superfluous in order to explain the existence of a steam engine. If physical science can put its fingers on nothing but a series of sequences, it merely proves that science is not philosophy, and is altogether a subordinate affair; but when philosophers, with their most acute spectacles, can see nothing in the world but an infinite series of invariable sequences, the sooner they give up their profession of wisdom the better, for it is just the invariability of the sequence which forces the reasonable mind of man to assert that there is a cause within them or behind them which makes the invariability possible. As to the second proposition, that a series of reasonable effects can be produced without a reasonable cause, any sane man—and the more ignorant the better for our present argument—will answer without hesitation as Cicero did, that when a box of letters such as are used to teach children the alphabet shall have tumbled themselves into a well-reasoned treatise, he will believe such propositions, not sooner. The third proposition, the real stronghold of all practical atheism, though at bottom equally untenable, admits of being dressed out in some sentences of plausible pleading, and therefore must be more seriously looked at. The pious theist founds his faith on the wonderful order and beauty, and the exceeding cunning displayed in the architecture of the universe. The most obvious and ready way for the atheist to contravene this argument is, to bring into the foreground the contrary of this, and to assert roundly that there is really as

2

much disorder as order in the universe. Of course, for this form of argumentation there are materials at hand of a formidable look not far to fetch: Neapolitan and Icelandic volcanoes; Lisbon earthquakes; inundations of the Garonne at Toulouse, or of the Dee at Aberdeen; storms, squalls, cyclones, shipwrecks; conflagrations, conspiracies, murders, massacres, idiotcies, madness, and all sorts of evil and foolish things which make a prominent figure in the newspapers. But before we talk on these subjects in a perplexed, or, what is worse, in an inculpatory humor, let us consider calmly what our position in this vast universe really is. . . . From our human position and partial point of view the laws of order are not always comprehensible; but disorder is really nowhere. If it were to exist at all, the world would very soon cease to be a world; constructive reason would dissolve into a general babblement of bedlam; and nothing would remain but a blind moving and unmoving of a tissue of unintelligent and unintelligible forces. So far is this, however, from being the actual state of things, that the more we penetrate into the hidden workings of nature, the more we discover that the superficial multiplicity of outward movements is governed by a higher unity, which pervades and controls all; and this principle is simply God, in whom, as St. Paul says, you and I and all things live and move and have our being. As in a mighty host of hundreds and thousands of men encamped on a battlefield of many miles of extent movements are constantly taking place which are unintelligible to the private soldier in the position which he occupies, but which all shoot out from the directing mind of the great commander as clearly and as efficiently as the divergent radiations of the sun: so most certainly all the multiplicity of apparently tangled movements in the living machinery of the world is the manifestation of that existent, self-energizing, all-present, all-controlling, all-molding reasonable Unity whom we justly



call God. Any other theory of the world is either necessity or nonsense." \*

I quote in the same strain from Dr. Shedd :

"There are no two conceptions more diverse from each other than that of creation and development. The one Shedd on crea- tion and devel- opment. excludes the other. Development supposes existing materials. Creation supposes none at all. Creation is from nothing; development is from something. Creation, indeed, implies a pre-existing creator, but not as the substance or stuff out of which the creature is made. This would be emanation or generation. The creator, when he issues a creative fiat, does not send out a beam or efflux from his own substance, but by a miracle of omnipotence wills an absolutely new entity into existence. This creative act is, of necessity, inexplicable, because explanation would imply the possibility of pointing out pre-existing material of which the created product is composed. But by the very definition of creation these are denied. Development, on the contrary, implies the existence of rudimental and germinal matter. It supposes that a creative fiat has been uttered and cannot be accounted for except upon such a supposition. It requires a potential base from which to start, and this requires an act of absolute origination *de nihilo*.

"For there is nothing more absurd than the pantheistic notion of an eternal potentiality, or, which is the same thing, that the infinite is subject to the same limitations with the finite; and must pass by the method of development from the less perfect to the more perfect (yet ever imperfect) stage of existence, and in this manner originate the worlds. The idea of an absolute perfection implies that the being to whom it belongs is immutable—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The whole fabric of ancient and modern pantheism

\* Blackie's "Natural History of Atheism," pp. 28-30.

rests upon the *petitio principii*, that the doctrine of evolution has that same legitimate application within the sphere of the infinite and eternal that it has within that of the finite and temporal—a postulate that annihilates the distinction between the two. The idea of undeveloped being has no rational meaning, except in reference to the created and conditioned. Progressive evolution within the divine nature would imply a career for the deity like that for his creatures, in which he was passing from less to more perfect stages of existence, and would thus bring him within the realm of the relative and imperfect. All latency, or rather immaturity, is necessarily excluded from the eternal One by virtue of that absolute perfection and metaphysical self-completeness whereby his being is without variableness or shadow of turning. His uncreated essence is incapable of self-expanding processes; and hence the created universe cannot be an effluent portion of his essence, but must be a secondary substance, which is the pure make of his sheer fiat. To the question which still and ever returns: How does the potential basis which lies at the bottom of every finite development itself come into existence? to what, or to whom, do these germs of future and ceaseless processes owe their origin? the theist gives but one answer. He applies the doctrine of creation out of nothing to all germinal substances whatever. For the doctrine of evolution explains nothing at this point. A development is simply the unfolding of that which has been previously folded up, and not the origination of entity from nonentity. The growth of a germ is not the creation of it, but is merely the expansion of a substance already existing. All attempts to explain the origin of the universe by the theory of development or expansion, like the Indian cosmogony, drive the mind back from point to point in a series of secondary evolutions, still leaving the inquiry after the primary origin and actual beginning of things unanswered. Mere development cannot

2



account for the origin of a strictly new thing. A germ can only protrude its own latency, and cannot inlay a foreign one. The significant fact in natural history not yet invalidated by the most torturing experiments of baffled theorists, that one species never expands into another, proves that, though a process of development can be accounted for out of the latent potentiality at the base, the latter can be accounted for only by recurring to the creative power of God. The expanse of a vegetable seed, even if carried on through all the cycles upon cycles of the geological system, never transmutes into the egg of animal life, and this only verifies the self-evident proposition, that nothing can come forth that has never been put in." \*

If the cosmos of which we know change to be inherent cannot be eternal, and if it is impossible to conceive that it should start into being without an antecedent unbegun factor as its cause, we have to find what this unbegun factor must be, and how it originated beginnings. It is impossible to think nothing as the cause. We are estopped by a law of thought. When we consider the stupendous effect, we are under the necessity of finding a corresponding cause. There can be no change without being as its ground. It must be a change in being, and a change by being; a change in the action of the cause, subjective, and a change in the state of the being affected by the causal agent, either a *de facto* creation or a change of mode. The cause must have being in order to have power, and the power must be transformed from inaction to action in order to be causal. It must be adequate to the change effected, and must actually produce the change. Thus in order to the cosmos, which we know has passed from non-existence into existence, we are compelled to postulate a pre-existing being of adequate power, first latent, then active. The power must

Change in cosmos  
being in its  
cause. supposes

\* Shedd's "History of Christian Doctrine," vol. i, 11-15.

necessarily be unoriginated, that is, eternal; but its exercise must be originated, that is, must be exerted under conditions of time. What, then, is that unoriginated being which, in order to origination, first and eternally possessed latent power, and which, by transforming the latent force into active force, evolved the cosmos? It must be either the substance or matter ground in which the phenomena of change appear in cosmic arrangement, or some other being, which either created the substance with its changing phenomena or, finding it existing in inert mass, worked in it all the marvelous changes which appear in the cosmic order as found. The first supposition locates causation in mere matter, and finds in it the adequate ground for all that is. It is sheer materialism, and excludes God. We have already pointed out some of the difficulties of this theory, but now call attention to some others.

The first difficulty is, to account for the translation of the assumed inhering and unoriginated force of this substance from latency to activity. How did the force evolve itself? How did the inert mass begin to move? How did it govern its movements so as to produce the outcome of order and apparent thought which is found? These are questions which must be answered.

It is postulated as a fact of reason, a necessary truth, that all change involves beginning, and must come under conditions of time. The cosmos had a beginning, therefore. It is a first law of physics that there is no free movement in matter. Every form of its activity is necessary, or under the law of necessity. This law absolutely precludes the possibility of matter ever having existed in a state of inactivity; or, if it ever did exist in inactivity, this law precludes the possibility of its originating activity in itself. The inevitable conclusion is, either that it was itself originated *ab extra* with its inhering laws of interaction and change; or that, existing as a latent inert mass, all motion was propagated in it by a



free power acting from without upon and within it. Causation, therefore, allowing matter to be eternal, is not and cannot be among its inherences. It bears nothing against theism, that is, the doctrine of a personal cause of the cosmos, if it should be conceded that matter is eternal, since causation is not among its inherences, as has been demonstrated.\*

It is of no particular interest to theists to prove that matter is not eternal, though it is essential to atheism to prove that it is. It suffices all the purposes of the theistic position, and meets all the demands that can be put upon it, to be able to show that the collocations of matter demonstrate an agency extra-material. Here is where the real strength of the theistic argument lies.

The second supposition assumes an extra-material personal agent, who by his unoriginated power created the material universe outright, or, finding existing matter, organized it into that perfect system which now exists. Against this theory there is no absolute disproof—nothing to show that it may not be true, while there is much real proof in its support, as nearly demonstrable as possible. We use the term demonstration of cause not in its mathematical but in its logical and moral sense, as a necessary deduction from the laws of thought—an inevitable outcome of both intuitive reason and the logical understanding. This supposition is not without difficulty, but the difficulty is not in its inadequate proof. No proposition has more ample support. Reason must turn to unreason to reject it. The difficulty is simply to comprehend the how of what we intuitively know must be true. The idea of creation is one which we

\* Chalmers, by an unanswerable argument, shows that the adjustment of matter, rather than its creation, furnishes the best proof of divine existence.<sup>a</sup> This entire argument will well repay a careful reading, and cannot be found so well expressed by any other author. The whole treatise is rich in suggestion as well as expression.

<sup>a</sup> "Natural Theology," vol. i, pp. 190-228. Carter's edition.

do not grasp. By this we do not mean that we are unable to comprehend the meaning of the word. That is plain enough. It is simply this : that an existing being, by an exercise of power which he possesses, causes something to exist which did not before exist. The meaning is plain and simple. Our difficulty is, to conceive how such a thing can be. This is its whole length and breadth, and nothing more can be put into it. The fact is admitted ; has it any force of disproof ? A moment's reflection will show that it has not. Can we conceive how latent power can be transformed into active power ? We are compelled to answer, No. But that it can be so transformed we not only believe, but absolutely know. It is one of the clearest facts of our consciousness. But if latent force may become active, though we cannot comprehend how, the difficulty of incomprehensibility weighs nothing. There is no greater mystery in the idea of an existing power producing matter *de novo*, than there is in supposing it to be able to handle existing matter. How <sup>Creation not</sup> it passes over to matter, and moves it by volition, <sup>comprehensi-</sup> <sup>ble.</sup> and collocates it as it does, is just as impossible to explain as that it should by volition call it into being. This we know it does, though we cannot comprehend how. That we cannot comprehend the how in the other cases cannot therefore, in itself simply, be disproof. We imagine that there is greater mystery in the latter case than in the former, simply because we are familiar with the one and not with the other as a fact. We have constant experience of the fact that a power which is purely mental does move matter ; but we can no more explain or understand how it is that this mental exercise sets our bodies in motion, and guides and controls their movements, than we can explain why a similar exercise of volition of another being wheels the planets in their orbits or originates worlds. The one we know as a matter of experience and consciousness, though we cannot fathom the mysterious how ; the other may be



as real a fact, though similarly incomprehensible. The evidence is so similar in the one case to that in the other, though not identical, that we are compelled to accept the conclusion. Evidence of a thought agent. That there is a thought agent exhibited in the on-going of the universe is as evident and irresistible as that there is a thought agent in the on-going of the most systematic and well-ordered human life, and must be conceded in the one case just as in the other. The artist, in handling the material of art, furnishes no proof of agency extra to the material itself which is not furnished by the orderly governance of matter of an agency extra to itself. And when we consider how vast that power must be which governs the universe over infinite measures of space and time, it certainly adds nothing of difficulty when we are asked to believe that a personal agent founded it outright in substance as well as ordering.

There is still another alleged difficulty besetting the theistic theory which we will do well to consider, so as to ascertain its exact bearing and weight. It is this: the theory requires us to admit that the eternal being is not an eternal *de facto* cause—that is, that there was a period when he did not exercise his causal power. This conception is assumed to be derogatory to God. Was it derogatory to him that he should exist before the creatures that he made existed? Does it derogate from his glory to suppose that things are not as eternal as their maker? The absurdity is seen on the slightest reflection.

But, it is said, How could the eternal, whose very essence is life, be inactive? To this we answer, Does all activity suppose either a changing activity or causational activity? If we are shut up to the supposition that God did not eternally act as creator, are we therefore shut up to the idea of absolute inactivity? We think not. There may have been an eternal knowing, an eternal self-consciousness of power and purpose, an eternal fellowship of life in the divine nature, without

supposing any change whatever in his being, or any thing of the nature of effects resulting therefrom. The theistic theory requires that we assume such to have been the fact; and it is impossible to make it appear that there is any thing of the nature of contradiction, or any thing illogical in the assumption. To account for causational effects, it is absolutely needful that the cause should thus have existed. To pass thence into the exercise of self-conscious power does not imply any change whatever in the essence or attributes of the eternal being, but simply a change in mode, which any creative act necessarily requires. It is not necessary that we should be able to conceive any thing about the *modus* of that uncausal existence, or that we should be able to comprehend or explain any thing of the passage from the uncausal to the causal state. Only God can comprehend God, or the ways of God. That which we intuitively know is, that in order to causation there must be a being who, in the causal act, exerts a power before possessed but not before exercised.

Mansel, in his limitations, denies the possibility of intelligence and consciousness to the absolute; but manifestly, if by the absolute is meant the eternal when existing alone, before any creative results, the assumption is unwarranted. The ground of the denial is, that both intelligence and self-consciousness require the not-self, but this cannot be made to appear since the knowledge of the possible and the sense of self-power might exist independent of all relations to the not-self, and might contain that difference between the self and the possible and impossible not-self that would realize perfect self-consciousness. Thus the eternal would be forever living, and be blissfully and consciously self-active, without passing through any subjective change or producing any objective change—changeless in mode as well as being; and as by supposition we have penetrated the realm where

Mansel's denial of the possibility of intelligence to the absolute considered.



he alone existed, we are in the realm of the absolutely unchangeable but eternally active—active but not becoming. There is, then, activity without change or succession of any kind. It remains that we consider whether this ascertained eternal and changeless activity, implying neither beginning nor middle nor end, is the only activity predicable of God; and, if not, is a changeable activity predicable of him, thus bringing him into the realm of the changeable? Does actual knowing in God imply a previous non-knowing—a process of acquiring, as it does in the case of the finite? If this were true, then it would only require sufficient retrogression to come to a time when he knew nothing; then infinite knowledge, if it ever exist, must come from absolute ignorance, and the infinitely perfect must be what was once the infinitely imperfect, and the eternally imperfect, since a solid eternity must always lie back of any conceivable date; but this is a contradiction. Still it must be that all knowing implies use of power to know, which is a form of activity. There was, then, eternal activity in eternal knowing: thus actual exercise of power must be an eternal subjective and conscious fact. In the eternal contents of the changeless being, besides the consciousness of infinite knowing, there must have been also the conscious power of bringing to pass whatever might be in the possibility of power. The eternal, infinite perfection, therefore, consists in possessing power but not in the actual use of it, which must always be in time. He did possess power from eternity to do all that has been done, when as yet no part of it had been done. So power in all its fullness may exist when it is not at all used. Activity as causational use of power cannot be eternal, but the power which is translatable into causation must be eternal. Now, when such power is used, it supposes no change in the being of God, but only a change in his mode or manner of existence. As to being, he is the same after forth-putting of creative power as he was

2

before, having acquired nothing, but having done something; and having begun to do, he may go on effecting new results or doing new things forever, without any increase or diminution of what inhered in him from eternity: may be the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, as he declares himself to be. The requisite, then, in this eternal factor, in order to the origination of the cosmos and all the changes to which it is subject, is not that he should change in content of being, but only that he should be able at will to begin to evolve his self-contained power. This implies that he is capable of free self-action; that is, of refraining from exercising his power or using it for any purpose he may elect, the choice of this or that being without constraint. A universe, having a beginning, requires the action of such a cause, self-existent and self-determining, and in no other way could it arise; the becoming and progressing series postulates the antecedent eternal and changeless being, and an exercise of previously unexercised, but actually existing, power.

Should any find difficulty with the question which inevitably suggests itself, Why was the power fallow so long, or why was it not exercised sooner? he has only to reflect in order to perceive that his question has no meaning. Sooner and later are terms of comparison which belong to time, and which cannot be predicates of eternity: there can be no sooner or later in an eternal order, as there is and can be no succession in it, and no starting-point with reference to which a commencing series could be said to be sooner or later. Events in the series are sooner or later with respect to each other; and among these the forth-putting of power to create or commence the series, being first, or at the very beginning, is the soonest possible, as nothing in the series can be before the beginning. That the power was latent until employed was, as must be perceived, a necessary fact, for its non-use was its

Sooner or later  
meaningless as  
applied to eter-  
nity.



latency. Its use begins time and falls within it; but it could not be used to begin time had it not existed before time.

All concepts of activity which imply change in the subject, or which produce change beyond the subject, must by the terms of the proposition fall within time, and cannot belong to what is strictly eternal. This is an important point, important theological and philosophical bearings, and needs, having therefore, to be carefully considered. The eternal must be immutable. If an activity may exist without producing change of any kind, subjective or objective, that form of activity may be eternal—not else. This position, if it be true—and we doubt not when once seen it has axiomatic clearness and necessary truth—precludes the possibility of an eternal flux, since change and flux are identical: and if eternal flux is impossible, it is impossible to explain the cosmos on that principle: a universe of flux, or change, or in which there is change either of substance or phenomena, necessitates an unchangeable source. We now reach the paradox, that there can be no change without an unchangeable antecedence: and the changeable and unchangeable are necessarily other—disparate—differentiable. The essential idea of change is *becoming*, or the initiation of something that was not before: a new state, new thing, new condition, alteration, revolution. Now that whose essence is newness cannot be the equivalent of that whose essence is non-newness: that whose essence is becoming or beginningness, cannot be identical with that whose essence is that it can have no beginning. A series of flowing points cannot, in the aggregate, be unflowing—that is, flowing and unflowing at the same time. This is so nearly axiomatic that reason cannot resist it. Since every change proceeds from an antecedent factor, all change, that is, the whole realm of changing activity or changing substance, must have an antecedent unchanging factor. There is no more reason why the

2

atomic parts in the flux should have an antecedent factor than there is that the first change should; *change*, therefore, requires a factor back of the entire series of changes; that is, an unchanging factor.

Flint puts the point thus: "The mind rejects as absolutely absurd the notion of an eternal series of worlds which rest on no originating principle. It demands a first cause. Flint's view of the necessity of a first cause. A series may be indefinitely extensible, it cannot be infinitely extended. Where there is a last term there must have been a first term. If each of a series of effects be dependent, all the effects of that series must be dependent, and on a cause which precedes them. If the last link of a chain be supported by a link above it, that by the third link, the third by the fourth, and so on, the entire chain cannot hang upon nothing. An endless adjournment of causes is a process which is meaningless and useless, and in which reason can never acquiesce. For reason to abandon belief in a self-existent eternal cause for belief in an eternal series, every part of which is the effect of an antecedent cause while the whole is an effect without a cause, is a suicidal and self-destructive act." \*

Should any still say, But what was God employed about prior to his first forth-putting of creative power, or the origination of an order of succession? implying thereby that there is something discreditable in such long-continued inactivity, he has only to reflect again that, God's original inaction no evidence he was not. place the beginning at what point soever, the same question would arise, and with the same force. There must, in any possible case, be an eternity of changeless being antecedent to all temporary existence. To the question, how God employed himself antecedently to time, there can be but one answer—*he lived*—he was—he was alone—he was a sufficiency to himself; beyond this, as to the how of his existence and activity or rest, we can

\* "Antitheistic Theories," pp. 20, 21.



know nothing. Still should it be asked, But why did he not remain in a state of inaction and solitary existence? No other answer can be given but that he determined otherwise from reasons contentful to himself, but which, from the nature of the case, must be beyond our understanding. It suffices, that in fact he did project himself of pure self-motion. There could have been nothing external to himself to determine him, for himself was the *sole* existence, and *mere nothing* cannot dominate or determine the possible or real action of any power. All the sources of action or non-action must be in the one only being; and by consequence there must be absolute freedom in the use or "non-uses." The universe, therefore, must of necessity be the product of an absolutely free eternal being, of pure self-motion.

But the universe that is necessitates still something more in the cause than mere eternity of being, knowledge, and power.

Evidence in creation of esthetic and ethic quality in God. It is a universe not simply of created being, in which the phenomena of perpetual flux or change appears, which a being of mere knowledge and power might produce; but it is a universe in which, also, are found things which proclaim an esthetic quality in the cause — forms of beauty, and beings to appreciate the beautiful. How could he create beings of esthetic faculty without the idea of the beautiful himself? It is a universe, also, in which play forces which may work to harm or blessing, and in which are beings who distinguish among these some as good or right, and what ought to be, and others as evil and wrong, and what ought not to be: but this implies an ethical nature in the primal cause, since how could he produce a faculty whose sole function is to enunciate that idea without himself having the idea.

Does a nature which distinguishes between right and wrong, and which is thus shown to be ethical, or capable of affirming moral distinctions and performing moral actions, render the be-

ing himself necessarily holy; that is, necessarily conformed to the law of the ought? Would a being necessarily conformed so realize the highest ideal of excellence? Is it our highest idea of a power to suppose that it is limited, as it must needs be if the being possessing it is constrained from within or without in its use? Has the being power in the case? Let us return to the contemplation of the ineffable, unchangeable, lying back of the flux. We have found that the eternal must be characterized by eternal knowledge of the possible, and eternal power to make the possible real. Will he do it? Does the power imply its necessary exercise to the full of making all possible real, or any part of it, or might it remain forever without translating the possible into the actual; and what will the result show as to any other facts of the divine nature than knowledge and power? Suppose that it shall be a content of his knowledge, that a translation of any possible into a real will involve evil or actual misery, will that fact in any way affect the question of its realization? Will he be restrained by the idea of evil, or impelled by the idea of good? If so, then we have here a being swayed by moral law: a being who knows and feels the ought and the ought not. Then the divine eternal nature is of the ethical type.

Do the facts of ethical distinction found in his nature, and the sense of the obligation of the ought which doubtless inheres in the essence of being which he finds himself possessing, without self-motion, from eternity, constitute his highest claim of excellence? Or may we go further, and assume that there is yet a deeper fact in his nature by which he is necessarily in thought, purpose, and act dominated by the discovered and impressive ought? Is his adherence to it automatic or free, mechanical or spontaneous? To this we must think there can be but one answer. The highest holiness requires that there should be a free and unchangeable choice, in the sense of preference of the

2



good. The good as known is but a concept, an abstraction; the good as admired is but a feeling; that the knower may realize the good, and himself be good, he must choose it and make it real by a free volitional act. That the infinite may be holy in the highest sense, he must be holy by willing holiness; and to be eternally willing holiness, there must be an eternal and changeless state of preference to the holy. Subsequent volitions to create according to the demands of holiness must, while perfectly free, nevertheless be conformable to holiness; since to be otherwise would require the renunciation of his nature, and also require him in the renunciation to act against his eternal preference, that is, to do what he preferred not to do. There must be in him the power to do the opposite, and the actual refusal to do it. This renders him *de facto* holy—holy in act as well as nature. Then the holiness of God consists in the choice of right as right with the power to choose and do otherwise; and its immutability is found in the fact, that he never will, not that he cannot, change his determination.

Or approach the question from another point. By supposition we have an eternal being, possessed of a knowledge of all things possible to his power, that is, of all things which he could make real by an exercise of his power. Is there any reason to suppose that there would be any more difficulty, as a mere question of power, for him to make creatures that would be utterly miserable by the nature he gave them, than the opposite—as a mere question of power, could he not fill the universe with torture? That he does not so do results from what, if not from impotence? Can it be attributed to any other cause than that he freely chose not to do it? If he had chosen to do so, would not such choice determine him to be infinitely evil? That he determined the very opposite, is it not the free choice that determines him to be the infinitely good?

Yes, but is it said his choice could not have been otherwise than for the good ; that, after all, therefore, his holiness is absolutely necessary? If this were true would it not eliminate freedom from his nature, and enthrone absolute automatism over the universe, and take from its head any ethical character as to all his acts? Can there be any merit in his doing right, when, by reason of impotence of will, he could not choose otherwise? Would not such a fact destroy the ethical character of a finite? Can it do less for the infinite? God must be free.

But what is meant by his not being able to choose otherwise? If he have the power to do otherwise, he must be able to will otherwise, for he can have no power to do what he cannot will to do, since his will is his power. If we are to infer that his actual choices are the only possible choices, absolute fate reigns over all. And though fate works to the good, it is no less fate than if it worked to the evil ; and if absolute fate, working evil in or through an agent, would free him from possible blame, as all must admit, would not the same fate, working to good, deprive him of all desert of praise? All that can be allowed in the premises is, that such is the ineffably perfect nature of the eternal cause, that, possessing all knowledge and all power, he freely chooses to conform all his acts to the requirement of the good rather than the evil, and thus possesses, as the most primitive glory of his active being, the character of a God who will only do right. His holiness is the holiness of a perfect love of the right complemented by a choice of the right—the love and the choice making the consummate flower of a perfect holiness—the glorious crown of one who makes abstract right real righteousness, by adopting and practising it. His moral perfection consists, not in its being caused by impotence to the opposite, but in his choosing the good. In all this statement the fact is recognized that the divine nature is in eternal harmony with the good. He both knows and loves the good



independently of any choice of his, in the same way as he exists without choice. But any act of his requires a choice to act—a distinct volition, and not merely power or even predisposition. To that act of choice, or exercise of volition, he must be always free. In the sense of predisposition, or preferential state, the divine nature is ethical and holy antecedently to any distinct acts of choice. These states denote the very nature of God, and are eternal and perennial, and in this respect he is holy from eternity to eternity.

Dr. Whedon, in his work on the “Will,” has well and forcibly put the case in words following. Denying the doctrine of necessity, he says:

“We, in opposition to all this, suppose the God of the universe to be an infinitely free, excellent, meritorious Person. We True doctrine, can as easily conceive an infinite omnipotent person God a free person. to be bad as to be good. Infinity and goodness are not inseparable ideas as attributable to a being. To prove the goodness of God to the naturalist has been a problem for the theologian. Manes had no difficulty in conceiving a bad deity, or in communicating the conception to others. Zoroaster, as Deity not necessarily conceived good. the latest researches reveal, held that good and evil are opposite sides of deity. The infinite of the pantheist is all-comprehending of evil and of good alike. Nay, Calvinism itself has never yet been able to extricate itself from the charge of placing the intentional primordial authorship of evil in God. But we Arminians hold that God is freely good from eternity to eternity, just as a man is good freely and alternatively for one hour. Infinite knowledge does not insure infinite goodness. Infinite knowledge (which is a very different thing from infinite *wisdom*) is not an anterior cause of infinite goodness; but both infinite wisdom and infinite holiness CONSIST IN and result from God’s volitions eternally, and absolutely perfectly, coinciding with, not the wrong, but the

right. God's infinite knowledge—omniscience—is an eternal fixed necessary *be-ing*; God's wisdom and holiness are an eternal volitional BECOMING; an eternal free, alternative *putting forth* of choices for the right. God's omniscience is self-existent; God's wisdom and holiness are self-made, or eternally and continuously *being made*. God is necessarily omnipotent and all-knowing through eternity; but God is *truly* wise and holy through all eternity, but no more *necessarily* than a man through a single hour. God is holy therefore not automatically but freely; not merely with infinite excellence, but with infinite meritoriousness." \*

This view does not deny or impair the doctrine of the essential and eternal holiness of God, but it provides for it in the only way in which it could be possible and real. Where necessity reigns morality is excluded. An act of an intelligent being can have no more moral quality in it than the motion of the planets if moved by the same necessity. The act does not become moral because performed by simply an intelligent being, but because the intelligent being is also free.

Moral quality cannot be predicated of any being which has not the power of volition, and can be predicated of those who have such power only as the power is exerted in the choice or rejection of the ought, or what is supposed to be the ought. The power to know the ought, the power to feel its imperations, and the power to choose or reject it, are the conditions of moral quality to the being, without which he could never attain it: as mere being he has it not, but only the conditions which render it possible. The fact that the good is agreeable to him is favorable to his attainment of it, and renders his nature pleasing, but it does not invest him with it, or in itself make him deserving, unless or until he determines to conform to it; and this determination, if

\* Whedon's "Freedom of the Will," p. 316.



it be automatic, entitles him to no praise. No being that acts automatically, it matters nothing what the act is, can have either merit or demerit, since it has no power to act differently. As well impute merit to gravitation or sensation. Goodness is an ethical quality, and can only be predicated of a definite kind of subject—that is, a subject possessing power of self-action; and can only be predicated of him because of a pure self-action as a will in choosing a good which involves the rejection of an evil, for every choice is also a rejection, and can only be predicated of him when the act might have been the reverse, the evil being chosen and the good rejected. His goodness consists in that his act was choice of good. Good acts must be of choice. All antecedent to the exercise of the power left him not the good, but the able to be good. Had God not chosen good, he could not be good. Gravitation, chemical affinity, light, heat, work to good; but goodness cannot be imputed to them, simply because they act not of self-motion and choice.

We find, then, of necessity, at the foundation of the material universe an eternal free cause acting to produce order and sustain it, and we have at the foundation of the spiritual universe an eternal free moral cause, knowing the good and choosing it, for the production and governance of both realms; a *personal will*.

Even Dr. Hodge says: "The will of God is free in the highest senses of the word. An agent is said to be free,

When an agent is free. 1. When he is at liberty to act or not act according to his good pleasure. This is liberty in acting. 2. He is free as to his volitions when they are determined by his own sense of what is wise, right, or desirable. Freedom is more than spontaneity. The affections are spontaneous, but are not free. Loving and hating, delighting in and abhorring, do not depend upon will.

“God is free in acting, as in creating and preserving, because the acts do not arise from the necessity of his nature. He was free to create or not create, to continue the universe in existence or to cause it to cease to be. He is free also in keeping his promise, because his purpose so to do is determined by his own infinite goodness. It is indeed inconceivable that God should vitiate his word. But this only proves that moral certainty may be as inexorable as necessity.” \*

The materialistic theory posits that each change in the endless line of evolutions is under the strict law of necessity.

It is important that we should take in all the implicates of this postulate—its exact meaning and full significance. What do we mean by necessity; that is, what is the significance of the term in scientific uses, and as employed by materialists in support and interpretation of their theory? It means this: that whatever has occurred, or by possibility ever can occur in the universe, has been and will be the outcome of a force which rendered impossible any other or different eventuation, or the non-occurrence of exactly that which happened or may happen. The coercive force is the agent of all changes, from eternity to eternity, from everlasting to everlasting. Nothing ever has been, or ever will or can be, that might not have been, or might have varied the shadow of a shade; this, in so broad a sense as to include the minutest changes of relation or interaction of atoms in severalty and in all higher cosmic forms; and passing beyond inorganic nature, and the realm of unmoral or unethical life, it is also true of mind itself, so that there never has been a thought or feeling or volition that was not necessitated by its immediate antecedent to be precisely as and what it is.

More specifically still, the theory is that from eternity, or without beginning, the ultimate atoms—that is, all the minute

\* Hodge, vol. ii, p. 403.



particles of matter—have existed, without the possibility of increase or decrease; and that co-etaneously and commensurately with the particles, in time and space, there has existed a force which has operated upon or within each atom, determining every possible change in it; each present modification is coercive of exactly that modification which immediately follows it, and was itself the product of that which immediately preceded it. The present cosmic order is the outcome of this infinite series of changes wrought in matter by this immanent, causational, coercive force.

Laws of atomic change.

Yet more specifically still, the co-essential force, whether an inherence of the particles of matter or in some way simply co-existent with matter, is unintelligent, and, itself unfree, acts as it does upon or within the particles producing their changes coercively, without any power in or over itself to act otherwise—excluding the possibility of alternativity.

According to this theory, the force itself is unintelligent.

Now let us look briefly at some of the *implicates of this theory*, or the consequences to which we are brought by accepting it.

1. If all change is the necessary result of a necessarily acting force which is eternal, the changes wrought by the force must themselves be eternal; for the causal act and its effect are co-existent. Logically one precedes the other, but in fact the cause is not causal until it produces its effect. But this is a contradiction—that is, the supposition that any change can be eternal. If any change be a beginning in some form, then every change is a beginning, since no number of changes, each of which had a beginning, can transcend beginning. But for this reason, if the force were eternal, it could not be a force necessarily acting, so there must have been an eternity—that is, a beginningless stage—when it did not act; which is in contradiction of the postulate

All changes partake of the nature of the force producing them.

that it cannot exist without acting, or that it necessarily acts. But if this were so—that is, that there was a beginningless stage when it did not act—then, there being nothing new to set it a-going, since without its action there could be no change of any kind, nothing new, it becomes impossible to account for its coming into a state of activity from a beginningless stage of inactivity. This first consequence of the theory shows not only that it is not true, but that it is impossible it should be true, involving, as it does, a contradiction.

2. Consequence : If each change is the necessary result of the change which immediately preceded it, then the most remote or primitive change contained in itself po-  
 tentially all subsequent changes, and they are trace-  
 able to it as necessitating cause. It matters nothing  
 what that first change or effect was, it caused the  
 next which followed, and so down to the last or most recent.  
 As there has been no collocation or composition or relation  
 among the particles of matter that has not been thus ren-  
 dered inevitable by that most primitive motion, so there has  
 been no thought, or feeling, or volition that was not poten-  
 tially present with and necessitated by that first movement.

Second impli-  
 cate: Each  
 change the re-  
 sult of an orig-  
 inal potential  
 force.

3. The third implicate is, that as there was in that most  
 primitive stage no such thing as mind, or thought, or purpose,  
 either in the particles or force then existing, that  
 primary act was meaningless, and as it contained  
 the entire ground of all subsequent acts, or so-called second  
 causes, there can be no meaning in any subsequent stage ; the  
 cosmos is meaningless ; there is no intelligence displayed in or  
 required for the order of the universe. Nothing exists that  
 represents mind — there is no mind. Then chance is the  
 factor of the *universe*. If this be considered a true account,  
 there is nothing that did not originate in mere chance. The  
 products of the mind of man are no exception, for these are

No mind ex-  
 erted.



in the line of all the changes necessitated by that first blind movement.

4. The fourth implicate is, that as that most primitive act was one simply of matter and force, void both of life and mind, and From nothing as that was the sole ground or source of all subsequent changes, it follows that both life and mind are causeless, or are a product from nothing, in contradiction of the axiom, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, unless it can be shown that non-life can be cause of life, and non-intelligence be the cause of intelligence.

5. The fifth implicate is, that there is no such thing as freedom or alternativity in the universe. That, indeed, is the very The argument destructive of freedom. essence of the postulate; there never has been or can be a volition, or purpose, or act, the necessitation of which was not in that most primitive act of unliving and unintelligent force—it parents all.

6. The sixth implicate is, that there can be no such thing as right and wrong, or obligation, except as necessity obliges, Also of moral obligation. unless it can be shown that the moral ideas of rightness and wrongness can be applied to effects of gravitation or similar ones, and unless it can be shown that things can be obligatory which are impossible.

7. The seventh implicate is, that as the moral ideas of rightness and wrongness, the proper and the improper, are excluded Excludes the ideas of right and wrong. by the theory, so all differentiation of character as good and bad, virtuous and vicious, as involving moral significance, is excluded, unless it can be shown that merit and demerit can be applied to a triangle for having three angles equal to two right angles.

“If we make a cross-section of such a system at any point, we find every thing given either actually or potentially, and when an apparently new fact appears, it is not something chanced upon, but something which always must have been.

In such a scheme we do not come to the thought of a beginning, but of a self-centered system, or world-order, which rolls on forever, infolding and unfolding all. This view might involve us in sundry very grave metaphysical difficulties, but we pass them over. The point to be noticed is, that this view does not solve, but only postpones, the teleological problem. If the facts themselves call for explanation, just as much do these hypothetical grounds demand it, for we have simply carried the facts in principle into them. But we conceal the fact from ourselves by casting the shadow of necessity over the whole, and this stifles further inquiry. Reference has already been made to the grotesque inversion of reason, which finds in the rational order a ground for denying a basal reason; the same thing meets us here. We construct our thought of the cosmic mechanism by an inverted teleology. The mechanism is simply teleology read backwards. But the notion of necessity so blinds us that the cosmic mechanism, which is but an incarnation of all cosmic products, is made the ground for denying purpose therein."

"Let us suppose, then, that the universe is founded in intelligence. We find the facts agreeing thereto. There is a rational work, according to rational methods, for intelligible ends. To be sure, our knowledge is limited, but, so far as we can understand, we find the marks of transcendent wisdom. In such a case it is not hard to believe that a larger knowledge would make this more and more apparent; just as we believe that a deeper insight would reveal the reign of law in realms apparently lawless.

"Let us next make the opposite assumption, that the universe is founded in non-intelligence. Now nothing is what we should expect. We find an irrational power doing a rational work. An unconscious power produces consciousness. Non-intelligence produces intelligence. Necessity produces freedom.



The non-purposive works apparently for purpose. The unexpected meets us at every turn. The facts appear in irreconcilable and growing hostility to the hypothesis.

“There is no need to pursue these considerations. It seems plain (1) that the belief in a free and intelligent ground of things is as well founded as any objective belief whatever, and (2) that this belief is one which enters so intimately into our mental life that philosophy and science, and even rationality itself, stand or fall with it. On all these accounts we hold that the universe is founded in intelligence. The conception of necessary mechanical agency as first and fundamental leads to no true insight, and ends in total mental collapse. Self-directing rational agency is the only principle that gives any light, or that can be made basal without immediate self-stultification.” \*

#### THEISM.

*The Theistic Theory.*—“Theism may be defined in few words, as the doctrine that the universe owes its existence, and continuance in existence, to the reason and the will of a self-existent Being, who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good. It is the doctrine that nature has a creator and preserver, the nations a governor, men a heavenly Father and Judge.” †

“As a matter of fact, this conception has not been wrought out by each one of us for himself, but has been handed down from age to age, from generation to generation, from parent to child. Few of us know when or how we became possessed of it. Tradition, education, social influence, have determined its shape and insured its acceptance. It is part of our civilization, part of our life, is the very air we breathe. Yet this does not relieve

\* Professor Bowne's “Philosophy of Theism,” pp. 93, 94, 119, 120.

† Flint's “Theism,” p. 18.

us from the obligation of ascertaining the rational grounds on which it rests. And this obligation, which our inner harmony demands, becomes imperative whenever the doctrine is called in question. What we have perhaps accepted with passive acquiescence becomes then at once the most urgent, the most sacred, the most momentous inquiry with which the human intelligence can ever busy itself.

“And since truth is infinite, it seems a reasonable conclusion that the knowledge of religious truth, like other knowledge, is progressive. It has been hastily assumed that in the discussion of religious questions we only tread a circle, and repeat in other phrases arguments which have been again and again advanced. But there seems no good reason for supposing that here, as every-where, the mind cannot, by deeper reflection, by wider comparison, by survey of the subject from new points, be unclothed of old errors and clothed upon with new truths. And especially may such a result be anticipated as a result of the new controversies which from time to time spring up. A new phase of error and unbelief, if it be proved to be such, can hardly fail to develop a new phase of truth. Progress is the conciliation of apparent contradictions. It may be, even in religious controversy, that both assertions are imperfect in statement. In dealing, therefore, with what we regard as error, we need not be disturbed if we find, on emerging from the conflict, that while we have established some positions we have been compelled to relinquish others. We learn often our best lessons from our foes.

“If, then, we believe that there is one God, and believe further that we can know him in his relation to ourselves, we ought to have reasons or grounds for this belief. But, upon entering upon a more detailed examination of these grounds, there are certain general considerations respecting the nature and limits of the inquiry in which we are about to en-

Knowledge of  
religious truth  
progressive.

Men should be  
able to justify  
their beliefs.



gage, that ought to be presented. The question is the most momentous and solemn that the human mind can consider, and it needs to be approached with especial care. I do not refer simply to the moral temper that befits such an inquiry, for it need not be said that in such a discussion we ought, at the outset, to divest ourselves of the spirit of the mere controversialist. The petty ambition to vanquish an opponent should have no place in a discussion like the present. We are dealing with a question of incalculable gravity, and one respecting which opinion in our time is widely and seriously divided. And the arguments of those who deny that there is any proof of divine existence, or any means of knowing the divine nature, have been urged with too much candor and too much seriousness to be met with any but the most considerate and respectful answer.

“But what I have in mind is not so much this moral temper as certain intellectual conditions which should guide our study. The nature of the proof which we are about to undertake needs to be carefully discriminated. Since the famous critique of Kant, arguments which once played a great part in the discussion have fallen into disrepute, and the opinion has come to be widely spread, not only with those who reject but with those who accept the doctrine, that the existence of God does not admit of being proved. It is, therefore, needful to state clearly, at the outset, in what sense we use the word proof as applied to divine existence. For it is hardly necessary to say that the term, in different departments of inquiry, is used in very different meanings. ‘The proofs for the existence of God,’ says Ulrici, ‘coincide with the grounds for the belief in God; they are simply the real grounds of the belief, established and expounded in a scientific manner. If there be no such proofs there are also no such grounds; and a belief which has no grounds, if possible at all, can be no proper belief, but

an arbitrary, self-made, subjective opinion. It must sink to the level of mere illusion.' \*

"If this be true, it follows that the proofs of God's existence must be simply his own manifestation—the ways in which he makes himself known; or, in other words, the phenomena alike of consciousness and of the external world. Our reasonings have no value save in so far as they are inductions from these, and from these phenomena our minds may rise legitimately to the apprehension of God, though we are capable in many instances of giving ourselves no rational account of the process through which we have gone. The analysis of our mental acts belongs to a later stage of our development. According to this view it follows, further, that the evidences of divine existence are innumerable, while at the same time they coalesce in a single comprehensive argument. And, being so countless and multiform, they address different minds in very different ways. Thus, as Mr. Mill truly remarks, 'the evidences of a Creator are not only of several distinct kinds, but of such diverse characters that they are adapted to minds of very different descriptions, and it is hardly possible for any mind to be equally impressed with them all.' † Hence a true review of the subject must be a very wide and a very comprehensive view.

"And not only this, but the exceedingly complex nature of the theistic argument is further seen in the fact that the very process by which the mind rises to the apprehension of God is a process which involves what is most essential and distinctive in its own constitution. Or, in other words, God can be thought of as the active, intelligent principle of all that exists only after a distinct consciousness of our own selves as voluntary agents. To conceive of the deity as a cause we must have

\* Taken from Flint's "Theism," p. 60.

† Mill's "Three Essays on Religion."



had some experience of causation. If we did not first know ourselves as causes, we should never reach the conception of a primary, all-originating will; so, too, it is only in virtue of the direct consciousness of our intellectual operations that we can conceive of a supreme intelligence. So, from our moral nature, we are led in the same way to invest the divine being with moral perfections. Thus the mental process by which we reach the idea of God is a process which summons into activity all that is highest and most essential in human nature. Whether the result which we thus reach is legitimate or not, it is a result in which all our noblest parts and all our finest faculties harmoniously concur.

“Thus the various arguments for the existence of the Supreme Being are but stages in a single rational process, and parts of one comprehensive proof. They are organically related, and they ought to be separated only for the purpose of comparison and study. The strength of the argument is the strength of the whole, not the strength of any of the separate proofs which go to make it up. And although so comprehensive and various an argument may appear, at first sight, confused and difficult, it is not really so. Though the divine Being seems so far removed from us, in accessless majesty, though no man hath seen him at any time, and though we have no direct or immediate knowledge of him, yet we know him as naturally and as simply as we know our fellow-men, and in fact we know him, if we know him at all, in the same way. We have no direct or immediate knowledge of our fellow-men. In either case we simply refer certain manifestations of character to certain moral and intellectual qualities which consciousness has revealed to us as their causes. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God precisely as we grow in the knowledge of those whom we meet in the intercourse of every day.” \*

\* Diman's "Theistic Argument," 74-78.

*Theism* looks forth upon the universe with the *postulates*:  
 “For every effect there is a cause;” “When there is adaptation of means to ends there is evidence of mind;” “The existence of any being implies the eternal existence of some being;” “From that which is eternal all that is temporal emanates;” “For every concrete contrivance there was existing antecedent thought, and every thought implies a thinker.”

With these postulates theism seeks to solve the problem of the universe. The visible creation and self-consciousness furnish the material. Out of these original elements it must build. At present it has nothing else. When it begins to inquire—for theism is intelligent, and insists on intelligent methods of procedure—it soon discovers, along with these original materials of its cognition, that they did not always exist. This it does not assume, but proves. Its next step is the affirmation they must have had a cause. This it does not prove, but knows. The proposition is self-evident. The knowledge is intuitive. By cause it means exerted energy adequate to all the contents of the effect. Its next step is again an intuition; as every effect must have a cause, the ultimate cause must be eternal and independent, having the whole grounds of its existence in itself. Thus it reaches the necessary first being, and determines its contents so far forth that it must be adequate to all subsequent actual and possible effects. The ground so far it knows to be invincible.

Theism now returns to consider the universe, to learn what it teaches with respect to its cause. It concedes that of the cosmic cause it knows nothing direct. Its only intuition is, that since there is effect there is cause. What the cause is the effect must reveal. Given in the idea of cause is a being of some kind acting. Coming then to the effect to find out about the cause, it immediately perceives

Theism world-  
embracing.

Theism de-  
clares the cos-  
mic cause to be  
intelligent.



in the effect a coherent unity or system—an arrangement and plan. This discovery necessitates that it should impute intelligence to the cause, for it knows that plan is the mark of intelligence. The framer of the cosmos it postulates was, then, an eternal being with intelligence equal to all the complex and marvelous arrangement in the system. Here again the theist stands with the firmness of an intuition. Nothing can ever remove this rock from under his feet. Turning now to his own consciousness, as well as to the necessities of the case, he makes his next step; which is to affirm, that in order to causation, idea or plan precedes causal action, or the exertion of creative energy—that is the primal stage of the movement—the conception of the thing to be done, or the plan or scheme of that which is to be produced.

Thus, by necessity, at every step he finds back of the cosmic effect an eternal, intelligent being, with a scheme or plan existing in his thought—the plan and scheme of the wondrous cosmos which lies under his observation, and by the study of which he is led back to the infinite cause himself. There is no break in the chain of his reasoning—there is no link in the chain that can be broken—the conclusion cannot be evaded.

That theism is in harmony with the rational and moral nature of man—that it rests on the solid basis of rational and irrefragable proof—that it furnishes an adequate explanation of all the phenomena of the universe—that it is the inevitable outcome of reason applied to the problem of being—that no solid objection from reason or experience can be raised against it—that it meets the wants of the soul—that it lights up the whole problem of existence and destiny with a benign and cheerful radiance—that it furnishes a complete footing for intellectual faith and hope—that it is the only theory that can pretend to give any rational account of things, or furnish any proof whatever of its correctness—and that

Theism is in  
harmony with  
the intellectual  
and moral nat-  
ure of man.

it is the inevitable goal to which all the instincts and rational processes of our nature tend, and, unhindered, do come, cannot be successfully disputed. That the higher we rise in intelligence and virtue—the more widely and deeply we carry our investigations—the more we come to know ourselves and the beings about us—and the more we learn of the laws and operations of the forces environing us on every hand—the more firmly theism becomes rooted, is equally indisputable. That it is necessary to our moral and social welfare—that the practical recognition of it is indispensable to the progress and well-being of the individual and of the race—that any practical rejection of it is fraught with danger to our most valued interests—and that perverted reason, and the luring desires of prurient passions alone are unreconciled to it, are the most obvious of truths.

Of all truths, that of the existence of an infinite and glorious Being at the head of the universe, its ineffable author and sovereign, guiding it on its way and caring for its destiny, is at the same time the most potent, the most consoling, and the most glorious. To deny it is blasphemy against reason and conspiracy against virtue. “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.”

Yet, after all, it has been said that it is impossible to define God. If to define an object required us to comprehend its nature and all the implicates of its existence, we could not define any thing: but if to define means so to state the meaning of the term as to make it a separate and perfectly distinct object of thought, separating it from every other, it cannot be shown to be impossible. It is certain that men do have an idea of God; and that it is possible so to formulate in brief terms the essential contents of the idea as to make perfectly apparent to other minds what it is, is equally sure. This meets all the demands of a definition. If it should be said this is simply the definition of an idea,

Man capable of  
knowing God.



and implies nothing more than its subjective existence in the mind, we answer that it is the province of proof to show that the idea represents reality; that is, that there is a Being answering to it or that there is not. Many definitions have been formulated, all agreeing in some fundamental element, but none so complete as to satisfy all minds. But the same difficulty is found to exist whenever we attempt the definition of any ultimate or fundamental idea. The definitions are various, some more, some less complete; all falling short of complete adequacy; but severally pointing out the object of thought, as it appears from the individual stand-point, with sufficient distinctness to show that it is the same object which is before each mind. However the definitions fall short of disclosing the full contents of the object, they do indicate it in such manner and measure as to make it impossible that it should be confused with any other; thus answering all the ends of definition. When a word is used to name or designate an object, all that is required by definition is to point out the contents of the word—the meanings treasured in it; so that the minds which employ it will associate identical meanings with it, and not confuse it with some other word or some other thing. The word is at best but a sign, and all we need to understand is, of what is it a sign? And then the question emerges, does that which is signified have any existence or reality of being, or is it a mere word without meanings of any kind? or if it have meanings are they mere fancies, to which there are no corresponding realities? or does it misrepresent realities?

The following are some of the *definitions* of writers of eminence, philosophers and theologians, in this department of thought: “God is a self-existent being, in whom the  
Definitions of God. ground of the reality of the world is to be found;  
 or, God is a being who has the ground of his existence in him-  
 2

self." \* "God is the most perfect Being, and is the cause of all other beings." † "The infinite and perfect is God." ‡ "God is *absoluta vita*—absolute life." § "God is the infinite and personal Being of the good, by and for whom the finite hath existence and consciousness." || "The divine Being is defined as he who destines all." ¶ "God is a PERSON, that is, he is the *self-centralized* absolute, the eternal, fundamental Being, which knows itself as a center—as the *I am*—in the midst of its infinite glory, which is conscious of being the *Lord* of this glory." \*\* "An infinite Being, who is subject to no restrictive conditions, but is all perfect in himself." †† "The absolutely perfect Being." †‡ By others he has been defined: "The first cause; *causa causarum*; the absolute; the self-existing; the self-sufficing." "In speaking of God as a *Being* we deny at once that he is a mere abstraction, the compendium of all the powers and laws of nature, which would thus necessarily vanish if these should disappear. We speak of him, not simply as the totality of all being, but as the self-existent One, who unconditionally is, and would be, though all beyond himself should be altogether non-existent." §§

Now, while it is perfectly plain that there are differentiable contents in these definitions, it is as plain that there is but one being in the universe to whom any of the definitions could by any possibility apply; they therefore answer the real ends of definition by pointing out that one being. Whether there is such a being, and what are his attributes, is the question now opened.

\* Wolf, in Knapp's "Christian Theology," p. 86.

† *Idem.*

‡ "Elements of Psychology," p. 377. § Lord's "Christian Theology," p. 31.

|| Oetinger.

¶ Nitzsch's "System of Christian Doctrine," p. 141.

\*\* Martensen's "Christian Dogmatics," p. 80.

†† Calderwood's "Philosophy of the Infinite," p. 2.

‡‡ Cudworth's "Intellectual System of the Universe."

§§ Van Oosterzee's "Christian Dogmatics," p. 244.



These definitions all agree in this, that God is a *Being*, unique, infinite, perfect. On the one hand, they assert that he is not a mere abstraction, or subjective mental creation; and, on the other, that he is not the impersonal, general all, "pan," or sum of being, but the eternal *personal* cause of whatever else exists. They do not attempt to define the *essence* or *substance* of his *Being*, but simply affirm its reality and grade. While by necessary implication or direct assertion they exclude all *corporeity*, they affirm *substantiality*. "By *Being* is meant, that which has real substantive existence. It is opposed to what is merely thought, and to a mere force or power. We get this idea, in the first place, from consciousness. We are conscious of self as the subject of the thoughts, feelings, and volitions which are its varying states and acts. This consciousness of substance is involved in that of personal identity. In the second place, a law of our reason constrains us to believe that there is something which underlies the phenomena of matter and mind of which those phenomena are the manifestation. It is impossible for us to think of thought and feeling without assuming the existence of something that thinks and feels. It is no less impossible to think of action, unless there be something that acts; or of motion, unless there be something that moves. To assume, therefore, that mind is only a series of acts and states, and that matter is nothing but force, is to assume that nothing (nonentity) can produce effects.

"God, therefore, is in his nature a substance or essence, which is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, the common subject of all divine perfections, and the common agent of all divine acts." \*

From the stand-point of nature we would define God to be: "An eternal Being containing in himself, without origination or derivation, infinite perfection; and who is the *sole* source of

\* Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, p. 367.

all other being that has existed, does exist, or will exist, and sole adequacy for any being that conceivably might exist." From the stand-point of revelation we would define him to be: "An infinite and eternal spirit God eternal, infinitely perfect, and source of all life. possessed of all knowledge and power, the founder and governor of the universe, who is holy, just, and good in all his ways." That these terms in both parts of the definition, that from the stand-point of nature and that from the stand-point of revelation, have meaning, and that they do answer all the ends of definition, is what no one can dispute. The only question that can arise is, Is there a being answering to these meanings? It is not pretended that any human mind fully comprehends the nature of this ineffable Being. Defects of definition do not invalidate his existence.

The Christian theory stands sponsor for certain definite views of his character and relations to the universe, as well as specific statements of his nature and attributes. The Christian theologian is responsible to make these statements good. If it should be shown that though there is a God he does not answer to the Christian idea, that showing would be as fatal to Christianity as would be the showing that there is no God at all. It is not simply a first cause that we are required to prove, but that that first cause is the very Being described in our sacred books, both in his nature and perfections, and also in his relations to the universe. This is the first great task Christianity has to perform. It is not enough for her to affirm the existence of such a Being; not enough that Christians firmly believe in such a Being; the demand is, that the adequate grounds for their affirmation and faith be adduced, so that men can maintain the status of rational beings when they accept it. We can have no right to dogmatize the faith without justifying it to rational intelligence.

When we predicate of being we necessarily predicate of



attributes. Being can neither be conceived nor defined without the implication of attributes. *Attribute* is not something distinct from the substantive being or reality, but an inseparable co-existent and integrant quality, which cannot be thought away and the being remain. The attributes of God inhere in his being, and in the same sense are essential, since the essence is not without the attribute. To know God as he is is not simply to know that he is, but what he is. This knowledge in its fullness is impossible to man, since the finite cannot comprehend the infinite: but man may both know that he is, and what are the incomprehensible attributes of his nature. The attributes of God are qualities of his being inseparable therefrom. His being is not apart from his eternity, any more than a triangle is apart from its sides and angles. So of every other perfection.

Change of relation does not imply change of being. If we conceive of God as existing alone, antecedently to any creative act, we are not to conceive of him as in any respect less or other than he now is. The act by which he called forth an objective universe did not quantify or qualify his essence or being: that is, it did not add any thing in sum or quality. The new relations into which he projected himself did not call forth into existence new attributes of his eternal being and nature. They but furnished the manifestation of what was from eternity in his Godhead. Should the entire created universe be abolished and utterly disappear from reality, and God become again, as he was anterior to creation, the sole being in existence, as conceivably might be the case, he would still be just what he is.

Whence came the idea of God is an ancient question.

To determine the origin of a given idea three things are necessary: (a) to fix the precise meaning of the term idea; (b) to find whether there is more than

Whence the  
idea of God.

one way in which ideas are originated, (*c*) to ascertain, if there are several sources, which of the several is the source of the given idea.

The history of the term shows that it has not always been employed in precisely the same sense. It was introduced early into philosophic writings, and played an important part under an entirely different meaning from that which it now has. "Plato agreed with the rest of the ancient philosophers in this, that all things consist of matter and form; and that the matter of which all things were made existed from eternity without form; but he likewise believed that there are eternal forms of all possible things which exist without matter, and to these eternal and immaterial forms he gave the name of ideas. "In the Platonic sense these *ideas* were the patterns according to which the deity fashioned the phenomenal or ectypal world." \* "These forms of things," said Cicero, "Plato called *ideas*, and denied that they were born, but were always contained in reason and intelligence."

McCosh says: "The question of the origin of our ideas is substantially the same with that of the sources of our knowledge; but in discussing this question, it is of all things essential to have it fixed what is meant by 'idea.' Plato, with whom the term originated as a philosophic one, meant those eternal patterns which have been in or before the divine mind from all eternity, which the works of nature participate in to some extent, and to the contemplation of which the mind of man can rise by abstraction and philosophic meditation. Descartes meant by it whatever is before the mind in every sort of mental apprehension. Locke tells us, that he denotes by the phrase all that the school-men designate both by the phantasm and the universal notion. Kant applied the phrase to the ideas of substance,

McCosh's view.

Views of Plato,  
Descartes,  
Locke, and  
Kant.

\* Reid's "Intellectual Powers," essay i, chap. 3.



totality of phenomena, and of God, reached by the reason as a regulative faculty going out beyond the province of experience and objective reality. Hegel is forever dwelling on an absolute idea, which he identifies with God, and represents as ever unfolding itself out of nothing into being, subjective and objective. Using the phrase in the Platonic sense, it is scarcely relevant to inquire into the origin of our ideas; it is clear, however, that Plato represented our recognition of eternal ideas as a high intellectual exercise, originating in the inborn power of the mind and awakened by inward cogitation and reminiscence. In the Kantian and Hegelian systems the idea is supposed to be discerned by reason; Kant giving it no existence except in the mind, and Hegel giving it an existence both objective and subjective, but identifying the reason with the idea and the objective with the subjective. Using the phrase in the Cartesian and Lockian sense we can inquire into the origin of our ideas.

“In accordance with modern usage in the English tongue, it might be as well, perhaps, to employ the word idea to denote the reproduced image, or representation in the mind, and the abstract and general notion. Thus explained, it would exclude our original cognitions on the one hand, and also the regulative principles of the mind on the other. An idea, in this sense, would always be a reproduction, in an old form, of what has first been known. We first know objects, external or internal; and then we may have them called up in whole or in part, magnified or diminished, or mixed or compounded in an infinite variety of ways; or, by an intellectual process, we may contemplate one of their attributes separately, or group them into classes. Our ideas, in this sense, are ever dependent on our cognitions; we cannot have an idea, either as an image or a notion, of which the materials have not been furnished by the cognitive powers, primary and secondary. It is always to be

remembered that by increase and decrease, by intellectual abstraction and generalization, our ideas may go far beyond our knowledge; still, as our ideas in the last resort depend on our knowledge, they must be drawn from the same quarter. When the question is put, then, as to the origin of our ideas, we are thrown back on the four sources from which all our knowledge is derived. So far as our ideas of distinctly existing objects are concerned, they are all got ultimately from the outward and inward senses; to this extent the doctrine of Locke is unassailable. We cannot imagine or think of any other kind of existence than matter and mind, with space and time; though, for aught we know, there may be other substances and beings in the universe with a far different nature. But then we are led by our cognitive and faith powers, intellectual and moral, to clothe the objects thus known with qualities and relations which cannot be perceived either by sensation or reflection. It is not by one or other of these, or by both combined, that I come to believe that space and time are infinite; that this effect must proceed from a cause; that this benevolent action is good, and that this falsehood is a sin; nor is it by either or both that I can rise to the conviction that the effect is forever tied to its cause, and that lying must be a sin in all time and in all eternity.

“The principle, ‘*Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*,’ has been ascribed to Aristotle, but most certainly without foundation, as the great Peripatetic every-where calls in intuition in the last resort, and is ever coming to truth which he represents as self-evident and necessary. The maxim has been fathered, I do not know on what authority, on the Stoics. It is assuredly not the principle adopted by Locke, who is so often represented as favoring it; for the great English philosopher ever traces our ideas, not to one, but to two sources, and delights to derive many of our ideas from reflec-



tion. It is, however, the fundamental principle of that school in France and in Britain which has been called sensational. There are three very flagrant oversights in the theory of those who derive all our ideas from sensation. 1. There is an omission of all such ideas as we have of spirit and the qualities of spirit, such as rationality, free will, personality. 2. There is a neglect or a wrong account of all the further cognitive exercises of the mind, by which it comes to apprehend such objects as infinite time, moral good, merit, and responsibility. 3. There is a denial, or at least oversight, of the mind's deep conviction as to necessary and universal truth. Sensationalism, followed out logically to its consequences, would represent the mind as incapable of conceiving of a spiritual God, or of being convinced of the indelible distinction between good and evil, and make it illegitimate to argue from the effects in the world in favor of the existence of a first cause." \*

If we limit idea to the real, and make it the equivalent of the thought-form of reality, we can scarcely distinguish between an idea and a knowledge; and if we make the thought-form a picture of the real, we exclude from the possibility of ideation any thing but material things, for only material forms can be pictured. If we are to maintain that we do have ideas of love, of truth, of goodness, of time, of space, of power, we must give to the idea some other sense than that of a pictorial representation in the mind of some external reality; and if we allow that an idea may exist which is not true to any reality, we must not limit it to the thought-form of reality, whether material or abstract.

By idea we mean any thought which exists in the mind, and which is supposed to represent some reality of some kind, or some fancy of the mind, which it creates for its own entertainment; or some concept of some unreal

Thought not to  
be limited to  
the real.

Import of idea.

\* "Intuitions of the Mind," pp. 329-332.

and actually non-existing thing which the mind creates, as a pattern by which to produce a real thing conformable thereto. Thus idea covers all representations of the real objectives of thought, whether realities, or fancies, or patterns of what may be possible reals. To justify this broader use we call attention to the question, Whether concrete reality first existed as such or as idea? If we suppose that the real universe is the concrete realization of the divine idea, these ideas antedated things, and are the patterns after which things were made; they cannot then be the copy merely of real things. The archetype antedates the ectype. The painting of the artist is first an idea or ideal; that is, a thought-form; and when transferred to the canvas it is but idea put in the concrete. That the mind has this power of creating ideals we know.

When we inquire for the origin of any idea the mind may entertain, we mean, of course, any idea which is supposed to represent some reality, and not any subjective fancy or pattern of as yet unreal things; but we do not thus account for the origin of all ideas. It may well be questioned whether the ancient schools, in predicating of ideas that they were eternal forms having real existence, were not seeking simply to give expression to the thought that in the eternal Mind the archetype of things existed from eternity; and if this was their meaning, it is impossible to show that it was not true: it would be simply saying that the universe which was built into reality in time was built after the pattern of the eternal thought of the divine Mind, as all human works are built after the pattern of human thoughts.

But while ideas are thus created by the energy of mind, we must bear in mind that these archetypal ideas cannot emerge as objects in other minds until they have been realized; and then under the laws of perception and self-consciousness, which alone give us the idea of real being as existing.



Whence the idea of God? The implication of this question is, that we ought to be able to give an account of the origin of our ideas. This implication is certainly not true of the average mind, if it be made to cover all our ideas. A certain amount of mental development is necessary to deal with ideas at all. Too much attention, reflection, introspection, study of the mental mechanism is requisite in order to a knowledge of the laws of thought for the untutored mind to attain unto it. But it ought to be possible to those who have made mental science a special study to give some intelligent account of the origin of our ideas in general and particular. We do not doubt it is possible. In attempting to answer the question, Whence the idea of God? we ask attention to one or two preliminary statements of matters involved in the answer, and conditioning it. We are to account, not for its existence in one mind but in all minds, and for the multiform differences in the idea itself as existing in different minds, and the same mind at different periods.

The first preliminary statement is this: There is a common human nature, which gives unity to human thought. There are accidental differences, but there is a fundamental agreement, so that one individual of the species interprets every other individual. They resemble, as plants do which spring from the same seed, or animals which spring from the same parents. As they have substantially the same physical conformation, they have the same general mental constitution, the same faculties and susceptibilities. Their faculties act in the same way, under the same general laws. They are subjects of similar instincts, impulses, appetites, passions, which arise in the same way under like circumstances. Individual idiosyncracies do not alter general facts. There is a genuine human nature which distinguishes man from every other creature, and which characterizes each individual of the species.

Second fact: While there is this fundamental agreement in the nature of the species, and the circumstances under which the individuals exist, there are individual differences, both as to amount of faculty and the precise circumstances under which they take existence. The latter fact we know, of the former there can be no rational doubt.

These two facts will go far to explain both the specific differences and general agreement of human ideas on all subjects. The factors and modifiers in the case are mental powers, ethical qualities, personal habits, and external environments.

To arrive at the genesis of the idea of God, we have simply to keep in mind the meaning we attach to the term *idea*, and inquire into the operation of the mental law under which ideas are formed.

By idea of a thing of any kind we mean simply the *concept* or *thought* which the mind has of the object on which it acts. In order to the action of the mind on its object, subject and object must be brought into relations to each other: such relation that interaction may ensue, and in suitable relations the idea of the object spontaneously arise in the mind, as the image of an object is reflected when it is placed before a mirror.

The term idea represents the concept of the mind.

If this were a perfect statement of the origin of all ideas it would prove that every idea which the mind has represents some objective reality. The existence of the idea would prove the objective reality which it represents; but this, we have seen, is not true. The mind is found to possess a power by which it creates its own objects; that is, it is able to fashion concepts which represent nothing but its own fancies; as of an ideal machine, which might be realized; or a flying horse, or flame-breathing man, which neither does nor could exist, except as a purely subjective creation. If the mind could not distinguish between its fancies, or those objects which it creates and



the realities which it acts upon, and which act upon it, it could not determine which of its ideas represent objective realities, and which are imaginations. In that case one would seem to have all the foundation in reality that the other has. But the mind does distinguish between its fancies or imaginations or creations, and its cognitions. In the former case it knows itself, and the idea which it creates as its own production. It is able to give a perfectly intelligible account of the source of the idea, and knows that it implies no corresponding objective reality. But there are other ideas which it cannot trace to such a source, but whose genesis it well understands to be of another kind.

The mind distinguishes between its ideas and realities.

These arise in several ways: First, a large class arise by means of what is known as external perception. The process is: an external material object passes before one of the senses, and produces what we call sensation or feeling in the mind—how we do not know, but the fact we do know; by which means the object and the mind are brought together and knowing takes place; that is, the mind has created in it, or creates in itself, the idea of the object, and knows that there exists such an object, and that the idea which exists within itself agrees with it and is different from it. The genesis of the idea is perfectly clear. In perception, no doubt can be created in the mind that the idea is the result of a real object impinging on the mind in some mysterious way. Thus we have the idea of all the objects about us—the tree, the landscape, the starry heavens, all other things which become objects of perception. In perception we know that we are and that the object is, and that the idea which we have is the result of our relation to the object by a law of our mental constitution. The idea is simply the form in which we think the object. And we are such that under the circumstances the idea or thought-form which we give to the object must emerge, and no other possibly can.

Thus we account for all ideas which relate to the external world. They can have no other genesis. It never has been shown, and perhaps never will be shown, how the mind transforms reality into a thought—how the external object passes into the consciousness so as to become an internal object—and how the mind comes to know that there is an external corresponding with the internal. Endless controversies have been waged on the subject of perception. Philosophers have puzzled themselves about it. Realists, idealists, phenomenologists, and nominalists have fought the ground over and over, but without adding any thing to the simple fact that by means of sensation and intellection the external world becomes known to the mind, and in the knowing emerges an idea or concept which corresponds with the reality. Ideas are thus a joint product of internal subject and external object.

But, it is said, those ideas which arise in the mind from its contact with external objectivity are not always correct. There is an object, and it has become the occasion of an idea, but because of the imperfect conditions there is no agreement, or but imperfect agreement, between the idea and the object. It still remains a fact, however, that the idea has this ground, that it is produced by contact of the mind with externality. We can in most cases trace it to its source, and determine the reason of its relative distinctness or obscurity.

Along with these ideas of the object in perception comes another group, as part and parcel of the same act, and having the same genesis, that is, the idea of *the self* as having an idea—the subjective feelings and acts accompanying and resulting from the mental contact with the object. Thus arise in the mind all thoughts of itself. It becomes subject-object, and only thus ideates its own existence, and the modes and forms of its own activity. Here again the source of the ideas is



plainly discernible; and the law under which they emerge is clearly seen.

Then again another set of ideas begins to appear. The internal perception starts a train of ideas, memories, reasonings. The ideas thus awakened are not given in the object of perception, but the mind is able to know how, by a mental law of association or suggestive ratiocination, the train is started. The object perceived calls up the image or idea of an absent friend, home, some scene of childhood. These new ideas have their real objects, which are not now in perception but are reproduced in memory, as having once been present with us. The fact we know, but are not able to explain the mysterious law by which they are reproduced, as indeed we are not able to explain any law.

But yet again the object perceived starts in the mind speculations with respect to itself, or philosophic reflections about laws, relations, causes—we reason, form conclusions; thus new ideas come and take their places in our minds, not given in perception or memory, but in the operations of reason. Again we are able to note their genesis and know how it is that we become possessed of them. We trace them to the processes of the understanding and the reflective reason.

Besides these, we find ourselves having ideas of things which do not trace themselves to any personal perception or memories of our own experiences and consciousnesses, or results of reflection or speculation or reasoning, but ideas which have been propagated in us by other minds—their ideas made over to us by speech or pen. Again we are able to see the genesis of the idea, to trace it to its source, or to determine the kind of source it had. We do not mistake it as a perception, or memory of some personal experience, or conclusion at the end of some process of reasoning, but know it as somehow propagated in us, though we are not able to specify exactly when or how.

Still, once more, we find ourselves having ideas differing from all these in kind and source—intuitions. Ideas <sup>Intuitions of</sup> which, on occasions, we find springing up in the <sup>the reason.</sup> mind. They are not perceptions of external objective realities—they are not memories—they are not reasoned conclusions—they are not ideas propagated in us by other minds—they are not ideas of the self, or the not-self—they have no substantive basis—they resemble nothing: they are ideas of the reason, discerned in the mind as changeless eternal truths and laws; seen in their own light as necessary verities. They are called first truths, intuitions, self-evident principles. When lifted to a certain grade of power the mind discovers them, not as picturable ideas, but as necessary thoughts. The only account it will give of their origin is, that somehow it knows them to be according to eternal reality and necessity.

To some one of these sources the mind is compelled to trace all its ideas. They are pure imaginations, or external sense perceptions, or internal perceptions of the self, or memories of former experiences, or conclusions of some kind of mental processes, or propagated ideas, which might be called secondary perceptions, or intuitions—ideas of some unreal fancy, or of some external object, or of the self, or they are necessary truths of the reason.

If any should be disposed to add still one other source in immanent acts of God on our consciousness—divine inspirations or revelations—we will not object, but this <sup>God in human</sup> would be classed with the ideas which are propa- <sup>consciousness.</sup> gated in us by other minds direct, differing only in the propagating agent and method, and in the authoritative value of the communication. How far God is directly communicant with the human mind it is quite impossible to determine; and how we are to be assured when an idea is awakened in us immediately by him is not clear. It would seem safe to assume that



he who is so intimately associated with our existence, who is the very source of life, who is the author and support of our faculties, may in some way, by direct agency, move us to the apprehension of his presence; but, however he may thus attest his existence, we dare not affirm that the idea of him is thus primarily awakened in the mind, and it is for the origin of the idea that we inquire. I do not find myself able to decide, by any examination I have been able to make into the deliverances of consciousness, that the mind is able ever directly to discern God as present with it, so that it can be certain that it is he. What we are conscious of in perception is, the self as affected, and, as I believe, the object affecting us; that is, the knowing which accompanies perception, or which perception is, is both of the subject and object, and the consciousness of the knowing includes both subject and object. The object is brought into the direct cognition of the subject. There is no knowing without this. The consciousness of the act or state of knowing, which act or state will not permit the division of subject and object, so that but one is present, one no more than the other being permitted to disappear, requires that both should appear with the consciousness, as known and existing, if not in the fact, yet in the thought. But I am not aware that any movement of God upon the mind reveals him in the consciousness in the same manner and with the same certainty, or so as to make the mind cognize him as it cognizes the object in perception, or the mind itself in consciousness. This subject will appear again in future stages of this discussion, when it will be more fully developed. I think we shall have to admit, however strong our desires to the contrary, that the Infinite One hides himself, and never becomes an object of direct cognition. He is found in the region of faith, not of knowledge; or if of knowledge, not of direct cognition.

It is probably quite impossible for any mind to know when

or how the idea of God first dawned upon it, or *took living form in it*. With regard to its existence in the general mind of the race there is reason to suppose that it was communicated at first to the head of the race. He was not left to discover it. It is probable that it thus has descended from generation to generation. We thus received it, and did not discover it or originate it in our own minds. It is certain that there never was a time when the race was without it, and it is one of those ideas which the parent instinctively transmits to the child as soon as it can be made to understand any thing. If there is any idea that is transmitted this is that idea. If it might originate in some other way, it is safe to assume that a case is not known where it was left to the hazard of an experiment, or that the cases are but few and the proofs too slender to build a theory upon. We know that with regard to the idea, as held by Christians, it is thus introduced. We have it by transmission. It was drilled into our minds by instruction. All the Christian ages thus received it. Our religious ancestors, the Jews, and the patriarchs before them, came to it by inheritance. It is a traditional heirloom. We trace it to the garden of Eden. We believe that its true genesis was a direct manifestation of God to his first child, and that through him it has descended in some form to the universal family, a rich and imperishable inheritance.

Consciousness  
may not detect  
when or how  
God first im-  
presses himself  
on mind.

But in tracing the idea to this source we do not mean to be understood that it does not assert itself on other grounds, or that it stands in tradition merely or in education alone. The child thus first receives it at a time when it is impossible that it should otherwise be introduced. All men except one began existence in infancy. What infancy is we know. To pretend that an infant's mind has any idea of any thing is absurd, much less the most sublime of all ideas. The doctrine of innate ideas



has now no place in thought. Any proper mental life begins in feebleness and develops slowly, as the natural life does. During the period of infancy, as early as possible, the little mind is turned to this greatest of mysteries. It is receptive, and in an imperfect way it comes to connect some meaning with the tenderly and solemnly pronounced name. As it approaches the time when it can think, when it can really have ideas, this great thought has taken some root in it. Environments retard or hasten the development. If a heathen child, it never gets beyond a dim and obscure imagination of some strange, mysterious power about it, propagated in it by its heathen parent. It takes on the idea to which it is born. It inherits the misfortunes of its race. It does not as a rule rise above its environments. The true idea of God never comes to it, but there is no people that has not a relic of the lost lore. If it is a child in a Christian home it is born to better fortune, and takes on a truer idea. We know that this is truth. These differences show that the idea is inherited and transmitted, and not self-born, or a product either of immediate divine communication or of reason.

When the opportunities are favorable the child attains rapidly to the consciousness of divine things. The seed planted is a living seed, and it grows up in its mind, and when the powers are ripened, God becomes to it an intuition. It sees him in every thing. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." \*

Originating thus in instruction, if it remained simply an imbibed idea it could have no other authority over the mind, and

\* Psalm xix, 1-4.

no other proof of its verity, than its fallible source would give to it—that is, in effect, none at all. It would stand simply as a transmitted tradition or legend, would take rank with mythologic notions. The existence of the idea thus derived would furnish not the slightest proof of its veraciousness. It might be accepted, might be influential, might enter as a governing force into the life, in the same measure as if a demonstrated or even intuitive truth, but, in point of fact, the mind thus holding the idea would have no rational ground for it. If asked for the reason of it, the assigned reason would furnish no proof or rational ground for the belief. So far as appears, it might be true or it might be false. The preponderating reasons might be adverse or favorable, and would be either as the intelligence and character of the source from which it was derived should vary. If the idea should be found to be universal, and yet no other reason could be assigned for its universal prevalence but that it was universally delivered over from the fathers to the children, this would not change its evidential value; it would only show that the tradition was universal, but furnish no proof whatever of its truth. It could never acquire any other value than that it was a transmitted idea, which might be true or false. The value of the universal belief, as evidence of the validity of the idea, will be discussed further on.

Mind might not be able to assign a reason for its faith.

As a matter of fact, the idea thus propagated in us does not remain an imbibed idea merely. There are reasons for it, and these soon discover themselves to the unfolding mind, and the idea becomes transformed from that of an imparted or taught idea to one which the mind itself discovers in some of the real reasons for it.

As mind develops, certain ideas and feelings spring spontaneously within it. Among these are the idea of cause, of dependence, of responsibility, of the infinite; yearnings after



unrealized good, longings for immortality, a sense of worship,  
 Ideas of God of mingled dread and hope, with a consciousness of  
 grow up in the mind and at- guilt and demerit, and an oppressive sense of the in-  
 test his work. visible power which every-where surrounds it and  
 pervades it. Turn where it may, mind encounters the invisible,  
 infinite Presence. He is the necessity alike of its thoughts and  
 affections, of reason and conscience. It sees him in the over-  
 arching sky, in the vast globe and the living things about it, as it  
 sees the artist in the picture, the architect in the building, the  
 author in the book: it feels him in the awful power which  
 moves and upholds all things; it hears him in the roll of the  
 thunder which shakes the world, the rush of the tempest, and  
 the roar of the ocean; the woods and hills are solemn with his  
 presence; turn whither it will it cannot escape him. He is  
 within and without, and besets it on every side. His terrors  
 make it afraid. The soundings of the infinite sea are within  
 it, and break forever on its ear; the vision of the infinite is  
 before it, and forever holds its gaze; the grasp of the infinite  
 is upon it, and forever makes it tremble. Awed by the  
 sense of the Infinite we exclaim: "O Lord, thou hast searched  
 me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsit-ting and mine  
 uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou  
 compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted  
 with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but,  
 lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me  
 behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. . . . Whither  
 shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy  
 presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I  
 make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the  
 wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the  
 sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand  
 shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;  
 even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness

hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day : the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." \*

Thus the idea of God becomes fixed and rooted in the consciousness and takes on it the form and universality of an intuition: of the cosmic effect, he is intuitively discerned to be cause ; of the immeasurable power displayed, he is intuitively discerned as the subject ; of the moral law revealed in conscience, he is intuitively discerned to be author ; of the religious affections, he is the ineffable object.

It is no more evident that man is a knowing being than that he is a religious being ; no more apparent that the objects of the cognitive faculty are real than that the object of the moral and religious affections is real. If for the faculty of external perception there is an object, it would seem that for these intuitive yearnings there ought to be an object. He can as easily shake off one set of his ideas as another ; but it must be admitted that the proof in the two cases is not the same. The case is more analogous to the unborn infant. The sensory system of the unborn infant growing in the womb points to an external universe as its end, but it furnishes no such evidence of the reality of the universe as is afterward given in the use of organs. So in the case of the religious nature of the soul, there is implication of divine existence, but it is not the equivalent of knowledge. It is proof.

Max Müller, whose rich and scholarly gleanings are prized by all who know the value of painstaking and discriminating research, is thus quoted by Dr. Lord in his recent excellent "Compendium of Christian Theology : " "As soon as man becomes conscious of himself as distinct from all other things and persons, he at the same time becomes conscious of a higher self ; a power without which he feels that neither he nor any thing else would have any life or

Max Müller's  
views on men-  
tal revelations  
of God to man.

\* Psalm cxxxix, 1-12.



reality. This is the first sense of the godhead, the '*sensus numinis*,' as it has been called; for it is a *sensus*, an immediate perception, not the result of reasoning or of generalizing, but an intuition as irreversible as the impression of our senses. In receiving it we are passive—at least as passive as in receiving from above the image of the sun or any other sensible impression; whereas in all our reasoning processes we are active rather than passive. This '*sensus numinis*' is the source of all religion. It is that without which no religion, true or false, is possible." \* This is an admirable statement, but I am constrained to think that it does not represent the exact facts of the case—it is stronger than the facts warrant. It is not true that as soon as a man becomes conscious of himself as distinct from all other things and persons, he at the same time becomes conscious of a higher self. That is not a *datum* of consciousness at any time; certainly not when the first consciousness of personality is awakened. If we could receive the statement in its full strength, we could be no more in doubt of the divine personality than we are of our own; we should know the existence of God as we know our own. There would be no more obscurity or question in the one case than in the other. But this is certainly not so. The utmost that can be claimed is, that in a perfectly natural way, when the powers of personality are set in motion, we early become conscious of the *idea* of a higher self; and of an inevitable tendency to believe in the reality thereof. We do not perceive him as we do external objects, for he is not an object of sense; we are not conscious of him as we are of self; we are not conscious of standing in the same relations of knowledge to him as we do to external objects. We simply find him as a necessity to our wants, both of the heart and of the mind, and believe that he is. Our short-livedness suggests one who is eternal; our weakness suggests

\* "Science of Language," p. 145.

one who is omnipotent; our want suggests one who can help us: thus our faculties create a being who is able to meet our necessities. Our nature impels us to it, and there is in it, as we shall see hereafter, a force of argument which produces rational as well as instinctive faith—but it stops short of knowledge. We feel that he must be—our reason and affections demand it—but that he is, remains a belief.

The existence of God may be a truth, and a truth susceptible of verification in what manner soever the idea comes into the mind; nevertheless the source of the idea has important bearings on the argument. In one case it would determine him to be an object of knowledge, in another simply an object of belief verifiable in varying degrees accordingly as the source of the idea was this or that. It is, therefore, an important question, Whence comes the idea? We have differentiated between knowing and believing. It is of great importance that we should clearly discern the difference, and also that we should always recognize it in our thought processes. What is known needs no proof; the attempt to prove is an impertinence. The mind, in knowing, simply knows that it knows, and neither asks nor attempts proof. In knowing, it knows that it has the truth; that is, that what it knows is true. It will not attempt an argument to prove it to itself, for no proof can either be needed or helpful to its knowledge. Knowledge does away with any other proof than the knowing. But, for the want of clear thinking, men sometimes imagine that they know when they do not; when, therefore, a thing is said to be known, it is proper to inquire into the facts on the ground of which knowledge is predicated. The statement of these will determine whether it is a case of actual knowing or simply of strong believing—possibly of delusion or misuse of terms.

In determining the source of our idea of God, and its value

God's exist-  
ence appre-  
hended in va-  
rious ways by  
mind.



as establishing the reality, or simply as ground of belief that there is a corresponding reality, we will do well—nay more, it is absolutely necessary—to turn our thoughts inward upon our own personality. For, after all, we find in ourselves the image after which, both in our rational and moral nature, we find God. Whether it is more than a creation of our own minds, is the question to the solution of which we now turn our attention.

Epicurus said: "What nation is there, or what kind of men who have not, previous to being taught, a certain impression of the gods." \*

Cicero said: "There is no nation so barbarous, no man so savage, as that some apprehension of the gods has not tintured his mind. Vicious customs have indeed led men into errors concerning them; but all believe there is a divine power." †

Maximus Tyrius said: "That there is one God the Greek and barbarian alike affirm; the islander and the inhabitant of the continent; the wise and the foolish. If in all time there have been a few exceptions, they were senseless men; as monstrous creatures as a lion would be without courage, or an ox without horns, or a bird without wings; and, after all, even they testify to God." ‡

Plutarch said: "Exploring the world you may possibly find cities without walls, or kings, or coins, or schools, or theaters; but a city without worship no one ever saw." §

M. Thiers says: "Whether true or false, sublime or ridiculous, man must have a religion. Every-where, in all ages, in all countries, in ancient as in modern times, in civilized as well as in barbarous nations, we find him a worshiper at some altar." ||

M. Saisset says: "It is a great truth that the root of relig-

\* "De Nat. Deo," lib. i, sec. 16.

† "Tus. Dis.," lib. i.

‡ "Diss." i.

§ "Ad Colotem."

|| "Consulate and Empire."

ion is indestructible. Societies are born and perish; sects disappear; man remains what nature made him—a religious animal. It follows that a philosophy which does not explain and cannot satisfy this immortal need of man is a powerless philosophy; and that a society from which religion is banished is an impossible society.” \*

“Man, when first he distinguished himself from the animal, was religious, that is to say, he saw in nature something beyond reality, and for himself something beyond death.” †

The same fact of the inevitability of the religious sentiment has the concurrent testimony of almost all writers who have treated the subject, ancient and modern.

There seems to be something in the nature of man, in his intellectual and affectional or moral nature, which, whether the idea be true or false, makes the idea of God his inevitable destination, which in some way he as certainly reaches as gravitating bodies converge to a center. To the reason, God is a necessity, not less than form is to body. We find it no more possible to think a universe without him than to think a sphere without sphericity, an angle without lines, a circle without the curve. He is to being what units are to number, what moments are to time, what substance is to qualities, what cause is to effect. The concept is a necessary birth. The mind sees him precisely as it sees the artist in the picture or cut stone—it does so *ex necessitate*. The affections demand him, not less than the reason. He is not less the necessity of the heart than of the intellect. To him the affections go forth as object, not less naturally than the understanding as cause. The heart has instinctive yearnings, feelings of dependence, of awe, of apprehension, of hope, of worship, of accountability, of the infinitely perfect and beautiful and good, which all point to him, and which lay it panting and trembling

\* “Revue des Deux Mondes,” 1850.

† Renan, p. 58.



at his feet. To this shrine it comes, as inevitably as there rises in it the sense of right and wrong, of remorse and approval. The shame and dread of guilt, terrors of conscience, forecastings of retribution, unappeasable desires, unrest, longings, anticipations, the cry of nature's agony for help, impromptu prayers that burst from the lips in hours of peril, hopes that look beyond time—all these are lines that lead to God; shadows of his presence in the soul of man. The moral law is voiced in the soul of man. It seems, indeed, not so much an external imperation as an image of the soul itself, a content of the faculty of moral consciousness, when it attains normal development. The law acknowledges its author—it reveals God. Wherever the categorical ought is found God is disclosed. The soul no sooner feels the imperation than it sees him. It may not be able to formulate the content of its feeling or conviction or discovery; but could it, it would be found to be a sense of obligation to some great power, not named or known, but felt to be real. It would seem from this that the idea is an outbirth of the nature of man. Dr. Hodge adopts the old word innate, but employs it in the sense of intuitive, and argues with great force that the idea of God is intuitive. He says: "By innate knowledge is meant, that which is due to our constitution, as sentient, rational, and moral beings. It is opposed to knowledge founded on experience; to that obtained by *ab extra* instruction; and to that acquired by a process of research and reasoning.

"It cannot be doubted that there is such knowledge; that is, that the soul is so constituted that it sees certain things to be true immediately in their own light. They need no proof. Men need not be told or taught that the things thus perceived are true. These immediate perceptions are called intuitions, primary truths, laws of belief, innate knowledge or ideas." The statements which immediately follow this obviously true para-

graph on the general subject of innate ideas we do not accept; but on the general doctrines of intuitive ideas there can be no reasonable doubt. That the idea of a god is of this class there is abundant reason to presume. It is as nearly universal and necessary as mentality itself. Intuitions are intuitions of mind in normal conditions. There may be, and probably are, instances of individuals and possibly communities, where by long-continued misuse of powers, or imperfection of organization, there is no proper expression of intellect, in which the most uniform intuitions of reason, as well as ordinary processes of the understanding, do not exist.

To whatever cause we may attribute it, whether to tradition descending as a common heirloom along the lines of the generations and rooting back in some early revelation, or the spontaneous outbirth of the spiritual nature itself, or some other unknown origin, the idea has gained a place among the most conspicuous and deeply and widely grounded of human conceptions, and the question now is, Is it true? There is an objection to putting the question in this form, as it seems to imply the possibility of a negative answer, which may be doubted. A better form is, What is the evidence of its truth? What are the grounds of knowledge? Certain knowledges are intuitive; other knowledges are empirical. To which class does this belong? Is it an immediate cognition, or an induction, or both? Writers on the subject have differed in the treatment, some giving greater prominence to the *a priori* argument, others almost entirely excluding it, and depending entirely on the *a posteriori* argument. There may be room for both methods.

The strongest evidence of truth possible to the mind, we doubt not, is intuitive cognition—evidence which will admit of no dispute, but which utterly refuses to be cast in the molds of logic. An intuitive truth is one which Intuition of a fact is as self-evidence. evinces itself, and admits of neither doubt nor proof adding



clearness. Such is the belief we have in our own existence—in the existence of the material world—in the truth of geometrical axioms—in moral distinctions. In such cases the mind simply cognizes, and can give no account to itself or to others of its state. The conviction that the reality is as the cognition, is necessary and universal. No mind has power either to explain it or reverse it. No possible evidence in other cases of alleged truth can raise conviction to as high a point as that which characterizes intuitions. That which is self-evidencing will admit of no doubt; nothing can be produced to shake the conviction of its reality. Logical quibbles and ingenious cavils may perplex the understanding, and throw the whole mind into turmoil and confusion and chagrin at its own impotence to answer, but doubt it cannot.

Is divine existence a truth of this kind? Is the mind of man conscious of the reality? Does it cognize God as it cog-  
Can the divine existence be thus cognized? nizes itself and other realities which pass immediately under its gaze with the same immediateness and necessity of belief? Does it know God to exist as it knows geometrical axioms? If so, then additional evidence as to strength is neither needed nor possible. No other evidence can rise to the same height, but other proofs may exist which are of so much value as to establish the point, if this supremest evidence did not exist. How it is that mind intuitively cognizes what is not given in sensation, as how it cognizes by sensation, it is impossible to explain. The deliverances of consciousness, external perception, and the intuitive reason are equally and utterly inexplicable. But the fact in each case we know. There seems abundant evidence that the mind in certain conditions of development (and by this we do not mean high culture), but simply maturity and normal state, such as enables it to cognize common axioms, does know God—is conscious of its cognition of him. In itself and in all being it sees

him as it sees the architect in the building, with precisely the same certainty and necessity that he should be.

But it must be obvious that to know him thus is not to know him fully—not to know him as he is to the utmost. Nor does this at all embarrass the matter-of-fact that he is, <sup>Man's knowl-</sup> <sup>edge</sup> <sup>always</sup> and that he is known by us to exist. In fact, our <sup>imperfect.</sup> knowledge of self, or of any other being, is but in part. There is nothing that we comprehend perfectly, or that we can give a perfect account of. Our lack of completeness in this case is no exception, but only more apparent because of the immeasurable greatness of the subject. In the words of Albertus Magnus: “Deus cognosci potest, comprehendi non potest.” Van Oosterzee says: “We maintain the position, that the knowledge of God is to a certain height possible for man; we must at the same time make due distinction between a perfect knowledge and a true one (*cognitio adæquata et vera*). The former is a knowledge which wholly comprehends its object; the latter a pure although highly imperfect knowledge. The possibility of the former we deny, our theology is a ‘*theologia viatorum, non beatorum*.’ Holding the possibility of the latter, we lay down the proposition that God is truly known, not wholly as he is in himself, but as one in so far as he reveals himself.” He quotes Nietzsche approvingly: “Thus it is God is knowable, but only so far as he gives himself to be known, and so far as the power of active or passive receptivity in man extends.” <sup>Nietzsche quoted.</sup> He then adds: “The highest guarantee for the infallible certainty of this knowledge consists precisely in this—that it comes from himself. If he willed to keep himself concealed, who could discover him? But if he wills to reveal himself, who shall dispute to man the possession of an eye wherewith to contemplate his light? ‘*Qualiter cognovi Te? Cognovi te in te. Cognovi te, non sicuti Tibi es, sed sicuti*’



mihi es, et non sine te, sed in te; quia tu es lux, qui illuminasti me. Sicut enim Tibi es, Tibi soli cognitus es; sicut mihi es, secundum gratiam tuam et mihi cognitus es. Cognovi, QUA DEUS MEUS ES TU.'—*Augustine*. So it is; God's original communication of life to man is the ground of the possibility of God and his truth being known to man." I quote from Dr. Hodge a paragraph of great value on the subject of intuition: "There is another remark to be made in reference to the intuitions of the mind. The power of intuitional perception is capable of being increased. It is, in fact, greater in one man than in other men. The senses of some persons are far more acute than those of others. The senses of hearing and touch are greatly exalted in the case of the blind. It is the same with the intellect. What is self-evident to one man has to be proved to another. It is said that all the propositions of the First Book of Euclid were as plain at first sight to Newton as the axioms. The same is true in our moral and religious nature. The more that nature is purified and exalted, the clearer is its vision and the wider the scope of its intuitions. It is not easy to see, therefore, why Sir William Hamilton should make simplicity a characteristic of intuitive truths. If a proposition be capable of resolution into simpler factors, it may still to a powerful intellect be seen as self-evidently true. What is seen immediately to be true, without the intervention of proof, is, according to the common mode of expression, said to be seen intuitively.

"It is, however, only of the lower exercises of this power that we can avail ourselves in our arguments with our fellow-men. Because a truth may be self-evident to one mind, it does not follow that it must be so to all other minds. But there is a class of truths so plain that they never fail to reveal themselves to the human mind, and to which the mind cannot refuse its assent. Hence the criteria of those truths which are

accepted as axioms, and which are assumed in all reasoning, and the denial of which renders all faith and all knowledge impossible, are universality and necessity. What all men believe, and what all men must believe, is to be assumed as undeniably true. These criteria, indeed, include each other. If a truth be universally admitted, it must be because no man can rationally call it in question. And if it be a matter of necessary belief, it must be accepted by all who possess the nature out of the constitution of which the necessity arises.

“The question now is, whether the existence of God is an intuitive truth. Is it given in the very constitution of our nature? Is it one of those truths which reveal themselves to every human mind, and to which the mind is forced to assent? In other words, has it the characteristics of universality and necessity? It should be remarked that when universality is made a criterion of intuitive truths, it is intended to apply to those truths only which have their foundation or evidence in the constitution of our nature. As to the external world, if ignorance be universal error may be universal. All men, for example, for ages believed that the sun moves round the earth; but the universality of that belief was no evidence of its truth.

“When it is asked whether the existence of God is an intuitive truth, the question is equivalent to asking whether the belief in his existence is universal and necessary. If it be true that all men do believe there is a God, and that no man can possibly disbelieve his existence, then his existence is an intuitive truth. It is one of those given in the constitution of our nature, or which, our nature being what it is, no man can fail to know and acknowledge. . . . The whole tendency in our day is to make the existence of God so purely a matter of intuition as to lead to the disparagement of all argument in proof of it. This extreme, however, does not justify the denial of a truth so



important as that God has not left any human being without a knowledge of his existence and authority." \*

From the constitution of nature we must accept this as true :  
Are all convictions of the mind true? "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.*" What has been received is true, if it spring from the nature of mind itself. The constitution of the mind cannot successfully be indicted as false and misleading. The apparent exceptions to the universality of the belief are so magnified as to need special examination. There is no form of knowledge that has not been disputed by some men. The self-disclosed in consciousness has been denied ; the reality of objects disclosed by external perception has been denied ; the fact of cause as disclosed in effects has been denied, the validity of geometrical axioms has been denied ; but these denials do not shake the faith of mankind, or their consciousness that the things denied are true, and that they are under the necessity of so accepting them. The denial, in each case, is but a protest of the logical reason against the reality of that which cannot be cast in logical forms. It is the case of one and an inferior power refusing to accept that which is dominated by another, without furnishing it content. The discursive reason demands, that whatever is received as true should first furnish it content by supplying premises for its logical processes. It is impatient when it is told that a truth is such that it cannot be explained—that it stands in its own right—that it is its own evidence. It resents the insult put upon it by denying the truth or by impeaching the witness. But it is a vain thing. In its deepest self the mind knows that it knows the intuition to be true, though it is not able to make it appear to the rebellious faculty. No direct knowledge can verify or prove itself. The thing known needs no proof. There can be no doubt that such a logical clamor can be gotten up in the mind as to obscure

\* Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol i, pp. 193, 194.

intuition, and bring the mind into such condition that it may deny its own intuitions and persuade itself that it has them not—as also it may sink into such ethical conditions that its intuitions will be blurred and confused.\* But when we inquire for truth, our conclusions will be valid and worthy of confidence in the proportion in which the mind, in the pursuit, has been in the unembarrassed possession and use of its faculties, so as to act in a natural and normal way up to its best power.

Environment must also be taken into account. Faculty without opportunity will be of little avail. The faculties will need to be sound and under suitable conditions of health, freedom, and development; and in possession of sources of information and means of knowing, full and ample. A child's mind is immature—not fully a mind: an adult mind steeped in ignorance and vice, or enslaved by false training or prejudice, is a crippled mind—not capable of use. No conclusion of any mind in such conditions is entitled to weight; but affirmations of mind, in ordinarily favorable conditions, are entitled to some consideration. The recorded perceptions of such minds, whether internal or external, their conclusions logically deduced, deserve attention—there is, or may be, probable truth in them. But the amount of respect to which any beliefs are entitled must vary, as the minds holding them vary in power, opportunity, candor, diligence, and simple love of truth.

Where all minds, in the proportion in which they are free and unembarrassed, cultivated and mature, through all times and in all places and under all varieties of *cultus*, and without passion, and many times to their dismay and terror, accept a thing as true, and find it impossible to explain the origin of the belief, or escape from it, we may rest assured that, arising, as it manifestly does, from the constitution of the mind itself, it is true. Human consciousness finds God present with the self; beholds him

\* See Professor Bowne's discussion of this point.



in every object perceived, discerns him in every affection, sees him back of all, underneath all, above all; cannot indeed measure the infinitude of his perfections, but it does behold the sheen and glory of parts of him, and what it does behold, it knows, or rationally believes, is the faint and imperfect manifestation to it of infinite and incomprehensible Godhead. As it gazes with trembling wonder it discovers that there is no end to his measureless being. It follows him backward until, beyond all computable years, he is lost in the eternity past. It pursues him over all worlds to the utmost rims of creation until, extending beyond the outermost bounds, he disappears in immensity. It goes forward to the future beholding his still unwasting energy of power, wisdom, and love filling infinity and eternity with fresh and more glorious monuments of his skill, until, wearied with the fruitless search, and overpowered with the magnificence, it sinks trembling at the threshold of his throne, and cries in agony of awe and rapture of wonder: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." \*

Upon this point there are some wise reflections in "The Logic of Christian Faith." Its author says:

"Let us now consider for a moment the light in which we should regard the mythologies and polytheisms that have prevailed among mankind. These are to be viewed as gropings after God by corrupt men. This view is of essential importance. There has been some dispute as to whether any nation has ever been found without a God; and perhaps too much importance has been attached to the fact on whichever side the truth may be. Whether the African, reduced to the lowest depths of intellectual and moral darkness, still retains his fetish or whether he has thrown his

Polytheisms to be regarded as gropings after God.

\* Romans xi, 33.

fetish away and become absolutely without the semblance of religion, can surely be of very little importance either one way or the other. The civilized man who has acquired a certain degree of knowledge and a certain freedom of thought, would base nothing on the superstitions of an unfortunate barbarian who does little more than follow the animal instincts of his nature. We may detect even in him the germs of a spiritual nature; but whether we do or do not detect this by actual observation is a matter of very minor importance. We know that they are there; but whether we detect them or not must depend greatly on our means of eliciting their manifestation, and consequently any argument of this kind is necessarily of little value.

“That man can deteriorate—physically, intellectually, and morally—is one of the great facts of man’s natural history; and that there are deteriorated men on the surface of the globe is also a fact; indeed all men may be termed more or less deteriorated men. This fact belongs to our argument in the following manner: If in studying the true character of a vegetable we ought not to look to a deteriorated plant, and if in studying the character of an animal we ought not to look to a deteriorated individual or race, so in studying man, and in asking especially what are his higher characteristics, we ought not to look to deteriorated tribes, for there we shall certainly find certain qualities, if not in abeyance, at least in a low state of development. If the plant cease to bear seed in extreme circumstances, we are not thence to infer that it is not the nature of the plant to bear seed; and so, even if we were to find a nation or tribe so degraded that we could not detect their acknowledgment of a God, we must not thence infer that man was not made to worship God. Universality in this case is an erroneous test of truth, and the argument of universality is fallacious; that is, if it were found that man did not



universally possess some religion, this, in fact, would be no objection to religious truth; it would only be a proof that man could be deteriorated to a lower point than we had previously supposed.

"We conclude, then, that it would neither destroy nor even weaken the theological argument if a tribe of men were found among whom we could not recognize the traces of theology. Because to discover the true characteristics of man, and especially his higher characteristics, we must not study man degraded and deteriorated, but must study man in his most favorable development, where he is performing the largest number of functions, cultivating the highest faculties, acting upon the highest motives, and achieving the highest ideals of life: that is, we must study Christian man." \*

The idea *that* God is, is not to be confounded with the idea of *what* God is. They are not identical. The idea *that* he is may exist in a mind which has no definite concept of *what* he is, or which has a totally erroneous idea of what he is. The source of the two ideas is different. The source of the former is in the nature of the mind as mind, the source of the latter is in the personal habits and opportunities of individual minds. It makes nothing against the foregoing, that there has been wide disagreement and discrepancy in the conception of God. The intuition that he is, does not imply the intuition what he is, any more than the knowledge that the sun exists involves the knowledge of its constitution, magnitude, position, and relations to other bodies of the celestial systems. The untutored slave knows the former as well as the most accomplished astronomer. The latter is known only to those educated in the sciences. The former appears in the shining, which all behold; the latter comes of research, which but few can make. God projects himself before the

\* Dove's "Logic of Christian Faith," pp. 154, 155.

gaze of all with the brightness of the sun, which is his chosen emblem. He fills the universe with his light, and every mental eye beholds him. His majesty and glory amazes them, fills them with awe and dread, but they do not comprehend him. For the most part their notions of him are confused, dark, and unsatisfactory. They can give no account of them except that they have descended from their ancestors—are the views of their tribe or race. They have imbibed them, and, baffled by the mystery, they pass the legends along to their children. But this makes nothing against the underlying fact that God is. The fundamental idea is true, despite the saddening error as to what he is. Nor does it imply that truer ideas may not be obtained, any more than the crudeness and ignorance of the rabble proves that there is no true science. Truth here, like the truths of nature, is to be sought. The conditions of knowledge are forever and for all the same. If men are ever to see, they must come into the light. God forces the light of his existence upon all, but if we would go deeper we must seek him. The intuition is no doubt deeper than we imagine. Through the incrustations of heathenish superstitions, and under the rubbish and *débris* of false religions, and along with the apparently meaningless rites and ceremonies and sometimes revolting and cruel orgies of seemingly diabolical inspiration, there may be glimmers of light which do not appear to us. But, however this may be, “there is one true and living God,” and it is possible for men to find him and though they may not know him to perfection, they may know enough of his adorable character to fill them with worship and trust and love.

God is not directly apprehended by sense, for he is, like the mind itself, invisible, but he is seen by the mind in itself, and in the world of external nature. In these the invisible comes to revelation. We see him in proportion as we see these; that



is, in proportion as we know them, when we enter into their true content and inner intent and meaning. A superficial view gives us a superficial idea of his nature and attributes—reveals to us an indefinite but great something; as we gaze more penetratively, and take in more fully the vast and wondrous complex of things, and as we come more intimately to know the soul, its profound wants and capacities and laws, its far-reaching hopes and possibilities, its moral and intellectual powers, the invincible and immutable laws which pervade and govern all things, the inner intent and purpose of all, the end to which all tend, thus rising into the true knowledge of the visible world and the mysterious world of our own being, we come to see the mysterious Infinite, by whom we and the world exist, more fully as he is. And yet, in our highest effort and most penetrating search the vision is imperfect. Revelation there is, but no revelation can discover to puny powers such as we possess the perfect Infinite as he is. The mirror is too small and the light too imperfect to reflect a perfect image, and our weak organs insufficient to endure the full blaze of such effulgence of glory. The training of eternity, and the growth of powers by incessant use, and more and more intimate familiarity with his ways, will bring us clearer vision, but, it may be, never perfect comprehension.

If we may not at this stage of the discussion introduce the Bible as containing a direct revelation of him from himself, we may, nevertheless, advantage by its suggestions and instructions. There is nowhere such a key to the mystery of the divine glory, such a clew to his marvelous nature and character. Whether a revelation directly from himself or not, it is a revealer to us. It, come whence it may, leads us up through the wonders of creation and the deeper secrets of our own being to a clearer, broader, profounder discovery of the unutterable glory of the infinite. It

God not directly seen, but cognized by the mind in his works.

God more fully revealed to mind in his word.

voices to us the deep things after which our souls are ever reaching. It unravels intricate and complicated meanings. It responds to our urgent longings and ever unappeasable inquiries. It brings the infinite out of the far-away and obscure, from the cold depths of eternity and immensity, from the awful heights of sheer power and sovereignty and self-containedness, and lays open to us a heart of infinite tenderness and love. It takes the God who walks among the stars and calls them by their names, and brings him home to us as a father in the midst of his family. It reveals a kingdom within a kingdom. In its light, we see rising upon the vision a transcendent glory, an eternal spiritual kingdom. The Bible alone opens this deeper view of the nature and character of God. We say nothing now of the source of this peculiar illumination, but only state the fact. As the soul responds to what is brought to it in the vision of nature, or as it mirrors back the image of God therein displayed, so, though it could never attain of itself what the Bible discloses, it at once recognizes the image as that of the ineffable One. It intuitively discovers the original while gazing on the transcribed image.

But it remains true, that though God is clearly seen both in nature and the marvelous Book, and though he becomes more and more distinct in vision in proportion as we enter the penetralia of nature, and though deeper insight pours from the wondrous page, we still do not see him as he is, but only parts of his ways and fragments of his meaning; and this must continue to be so forever. There will forever be a deeper depth of the fathomless sea. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Dr. Raymond's statement of the case will scarcely admit of improvement. He says: "We conclude therefore that man is

Still God is but partially revealed either in nature or revelation.



such by creation in nature and constitution that, circumstanced as he is in his earthly existence, there arises necessarily in his mind, among the earliest convictions of his conscious intelligence, a sense of dependence and of obligation; that by the natural processes of thought he early comes to an apprehension of unlimited necessary being, which is also first cause; that in the objects above, beneath, and around him in the material world, in the things about which his thoughts are constantly employed, there are every-where such and so many evidences of power and intelligent design, that he very readily recognizes the existence of a super-sensuous, extra-mundane, all powerful, infinitely wise Person, who is the author of his being and the source of his blessings, upon whom he is dependent for all that he is or hopes, and to whom he is under obligations of gratitude, reverence, and obedience; that the necessary laws of thought are so correlated to the manifestations of God in his works and ways in nature and providence that a system of pure theism is possible, and that mankind generally are under obligations to comply with the requirements of such a system; that is, they are without excuse for any failures in what might be justly required of those having such a knowledge of God and of man's relation to his maker; that such a system of mere theism, even in its highest possible forms, is inadequate for the higher purposes of human life, and hence the necessity and presumption of a revelation of God's will in words; that such a revelation is contained in the writings of the sacred Scriptures, that by them, 'the man of God' may be 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works;' and that, 'by taking heed thereto as unto a light shining in a dark place,' man may attain unto the highest purposes of his earthly existence, may secure the ultimate end of his creation—his own greatest good and the highest glory of his Creator." \*

Raymond's  
statement of  
the subject.

\* "Systematic Theology," vol. i, pp. 260-263.

The idea of God is not only the basis idea of a theologic system as the first truth, but is the tap-root of the <sup>Proofs of Divine existence.</sup> system, which has in it the principle of life and growth, which determines and gives form and reality to all the remaining parts. It is so essential to the entire contents, that if it lack reality and substance the entire system vanishes as a myth, and all its parts disintegrate into empty airy nothings. Atheism does not modify theology: it annihilates it. A godless universe is a universe which furnishes no standing ground for any ethical, religious, or theological idea; a universe from which the entire circle of devout sentiments, feelings, faiths, duties, hopes, fears, responsibilities, are swept out as mere chimeras. In such a universe the temple is an impertinence, worship a farce, conscience a snare, prayer a cry of imbecility, immortality a dream. Cut off the tap-root, the artificial tree, lifeless as cinders, must fade and perish in a day. On the other hand, if there be truth in the idea—if God is—then religion becomes a necessity. From that tap-root must grow the tree of theology. Out of its life must spring doctrines, duties, responsibilities, hopes, fears. Around it must grow temples and altars of worship.

Thus the question whose discussion we now initiate is, as we see, the vital question. It lies at the foundation, and its determination determines all. Whatever interest we may have in any religious beliefs centers here.

The fact of divine existence may have some bearing on the origin of the idea. It is possible to conceive the reality of God, and yet total human ignorance of it. He might have so made us, or so concealed himself, that our limited faculties would have entirely failed to reach the knowledge or even idea of his existence. It is conceivable, on the other hand, that disallowing the reality, the idea might arise in the mind as a pure imagination, or outcome of inconsequent reasoning, or demand of the



affections, or in some other way. The existence of the idea, therefore, cannot determine any thing, or be of great weight in determining the actual fact in the case; and yet the fact of divine existence might have much bearing on the question of the origin of the idea. He may have so made us that from within, out of our nature itself, the idea is inevitably born; or he may have so made us that, as we come to know ourselves and the universe about us, we are compelled to think him, even though we may not be able to *know* the reality of his existence. He may in some way, through the affections or through the reason or through the logical understanding or to the spontaneous conviction, have so put himself into relations with us that we are compelled to think him without being able to assign a reason: or he may have put himself into such relations with us that we are able to assign reasons which compel the belief, but which are not absolute knowing.

#### EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

If the idea of God, as we have seen, deserves to be classed among the intuitive ideas—that is, if it is one which clearly rises from the nature and constitution of the mind itself in normal conditions—we have in this fact intuitive grounds for believing it true. It becomes one of those primary truths or cognitions of the reason which compel their own acceptance. For this reason it has been assumed that the question of the existence of God is no more a proper subject of argument than are axioms, or the question of our own existence. That direct knowing is not only better and more convincing than proving, but makes higher proof impossible. Axioms may be proved, but no proof can be more convincing than the simple force of proof which they contain in themselves when clearly perceived; and the mind which cavils at them will cavil at any possible argument. Nevertheless, in the case of the subject in hand, it

is certain that proof is possible and highly useful to all who desire to know all the rational grounds of belief; but especially to those who may not see the grounds for claiming for the idea the rank of an intuition. An intuition, while it establishes truth, is not the only means of establishing it. If the direct knowing will admit of no contradiction, there are also other sources of proof that are sufficient to silence reasonable doubt. If there are those who still insist that they do not find themselves face to face with God, that they even doubt his existence, or at least demand proof thereof, then we ask attention to the considerations following, deduced by the discursive reason.

The discussion has been conducted with great ability by the champions both of skepticism and faith, and is very voluminous. It is doubtful whether any thing can be added in either clearness or force. The reader who may desire to extend his research in this most important and interesting field will find conveniently at hand an amount of material in ingenious and critical learning which will more than satisfy his largest demand. There are some works of special merit: as the thirteen volumes of the Bridgewater Treatises—a perfect thesaurus on the subject; Thompson's "Theism;" Howe's "Living Temple;" Paley's "Natural Theology"—masters who have furnished materials for all subsequent writers, with similar discussions by Chalmers, Crombie, Brougham, Chadbourne, and many others, to which should be added Cudworth's "Intellectual System of the Universe," in reply to the ancient atheists—a work not less distinguished for its learning than convincing for its argument. These are mentioned as of special value; but the argument, *pro* and *con*, is presented in great force by almost all the eminent men who have rendered theology and philosophy illustrious. If not specifically treated in one form or another, it crops out in all learned dissertations on

Able disputants  
for and against  
God's exist-  
ence.



the laws of being and of thought. We ought not to omit from this list recent writers who rank with the most eminent of those already mentioned, and who, because of their recency, have gathered up the last results of research. Such are Professor Bowne, in his two books on "Theism;" G. P. Fisher's "Grounds of Theistic Belief;" Harris's "Philosophical Basis of Theism"—all of which ought to be studied with care in disposing of the great problem.

To pretend originality, or even to bring out the essence of what has been thought on a subject which has been matter of such vast interest to the best minds for ages, and which has elicited such various and profound learning in its elucidation, would be the merest affectation. We can but aim at presenting some specimen grounds for claiming the verdict of reason—that God is real and not a chimera—by pointing out a few of the innumerable impressive memorials of his existence with which he has overspread creation, together with some evidences he has interwoven with the very texture and constitution of the mind, which searches for and detects the inscription of his name in the matchless volume of his works. We shall find that the star-lit sky is not more real than he who reared its mighty arches; that the weird and wondrous splendor of the one is but the faint reflection of the infinite and unpicturable glory of the other.

The argument necessarily begins with the assumption of being or existence. There is now being. This cannot be disputed, since to dispute it implies one as existing who knows the proposition and who disputes its validity. Present being necessitates eternal being of some kind, since if at any time there had been pure non-existence, existence could never have become a fact. "Ex nihilo nihil fit." Assuming, then, that something has always existed, there are three hypotheses which may be formed regarding the eternal something in relation to

the cosmos or universe. 1. That it is an intelligent being distinct from the universe, and by whom the universe has been framed: 2. That it is the universe itself, the matter ( $\psi\lambda\eta$ ) of which has always existed, developing itself in various forms and passing through innumerable changes, but never having in any proper sense begun to be: or, 3. That it is an intelligent substance not existing as a personality or distinct from the universe, but identical with it, developing itself in it, becoming conscious of itself in intelligent beings, and comprising in itself the sum of all existence. The first of these hypotheses is that of theism, the second is that of atheism, the third is that of pantheism. Of these one must be true, and only one can be true.\*

Each of these hypotheses has been advocated by men of learning. The disproof of either two establishes the remaining one. We hope to be able to show that there are unanswerable objections to the second and third, as named in the above order; and also to make it appear, not simply on the ground that it is the only remaining alternative, but for many other conclusive reasons, that the first named is true. The subject is one of great importance, the discussion of which deserves the most patient and earnest use of the powers. It has always commanded the profoundest attention of the noblest minds, and standing in such high and commanding relations as it does to the philosophy of being, and also to the true conduct of life, must continue to do so forever. Only noble thought is worthy of the theme.

The philosophic *doctrine of cause* enters so largely into the discussion that we detain the reader for its statement and defense. The doctrine is expressed in brief in the common Philosophic  
doctrine of  
cause. formulation, "Every effect implies a cause," or, "There can be no effect without a cause." This is enunciated as

\* See "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Theology."



an axiom—an intuitive truth. It has not, however, escaped a challenge, by a very eminent philosopher—Mr. David Hume. To see the ground of challenge, it is needful to examine the terms in the formulary. By effect is not meant being—but *changes* of all kinds which appear in being—the minutest no less than the most radical. By cause is meant some force exerted or evolved by which the change is effected. The force may be *ab intra* or *ab extra*; but whether from within or from without it must act antecedently, and in order to the change produced. The cause must be fundamentally different and differentiable from the effect. In all cases actual cause is exerted force, effect is result of exerted force or power. In all cases cause implies being which evolves force or exerts power; and in all cases effect implies being produced by force, or being modified by force. Force may be potential in a being latent in power, without being active; effects may also exist *in posse* without existing in fact, in the capacity of being to receive force and undergo changes—possible cause, and possible effect. It is usual and proper to denominate the being by whom or which force is exerted the cause, since force has no existence or fulcrum of action in itself.

Force is various in its manifestation, and so takes the plural form—*forces*; it is diverse in kinds, and so takes diverse names, as voluntary and necessary, natural and supernatural, material and spiritual, primary and secondary, eternal and created, latent and active, dynamic and static, according as it produces this or that change, or is capable of producing this or that change. In nature, tendencies and uniform processes or changes are ascribed to fixed or uniform forces, and the methods of their action are called laws of nature—as chemical, mechanical, vital. The doctrine of cause and effect predicates a connection between force and the effect, whereby the latter results from or is produced by the former, in such manner that the latter

cannot exist without the other and is necessitated by the other. This has been disputed; and it has been asserted that there is no connection whatever other than a mere concurrence or succession in events. This is the doctrine of Hume, and is implied in the teachings of Dr. Thomas Brown. Mr. Hume says, "That all events seem entirely loose and separate. One event follows another; but we never can observe any tie between them. They seem conjoined but never connected. And as we can have no idea of any thing which never appeared to our outward sense in inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion seems to be, that we have no idea of connection or power at all, and these words are absolutely without meaning when employed either in philosophical reasonings or in common life."\* To this assumption Wardlaw replies: "If it were true that our idea of cause and effect is absolutely no more than an idea of frequent or uniform precedence or sequence, nothing else and nothing more, it would seem to follow as a legitimate conclusion, that frequent or uniform precedence or sequence should always impress our minds with the idea of what we denominate cause and effect. But nothing can be more certain than that it is not so; that there are instances of precedence and sequence the most amazingly uniform, which never for a moment suggest any thought of causation or connection. The exemplifications of this are commonplace; but not on that account the less in point. The more commonplace, indeed, and manifest to all, the better. The seasons of the year follow each other in regular, unaltering succession. Yet who ever thinks of spring being the cause of summer, or summer of autumn, or autumn of winter, or winter of spring. Day succeeds night and night succeeds day with a regularity that has never varied (save in one recorded miraculous instance) since the formation (I speak, of course, according to our present belief and the date of the

\* Hume's "Essays," vol. ii, p. 77.



world's history) of the heavens and the earth. Yet who ever imagined that the day produced the night or the night the day? that the light of the one was the cause of the darkness of the other, or *vice versa*, that the darkness was the cause of the regularly returning light? There is, I am persuaded, the idea of connection as well as of conjunction; of the event or fact which precedes possessing some kind of fitness, influence, power, or what else soever you choose to call it, for the production of the event or fact which follows it. The *modus operandi* of the influence or power may elude our penetration; but this never does divest our minds, nor is there any reason why it should, of the conviction of its reality. The perception of the precise nature of the power, or of the mode of its operation, is not necessary to the conviction." \*

These reflections are obviously true. While it is true that we cannot represent power in words, and while it is true that Every change produced by some cause. we cannot perceive it by sense, and while it is true that the mode of its operation in producing effects eludes us, it is an intuitive truth—a truth of universal and necessary cognition—that every change produced is caused by some antecedent or concurrent influence, force, power, or causal energy by whatever name called. If this be not a known truth there is no known truth, and reasoning is vain; no predication of any kind is possible. If we do not know that the spark ignites the powder, and that the ball is propelled by its explosion, there is no knowledge; and so of all common effects with which we are conversant every moment; as that the moving wind presses on the sail and drives the ship; the steam moves the piston and the wheel, and the wheel the vessel; the arm wields the ax and the ax cuts the tree. These things we do not imagine, but know. It is waste of time to extend the illustration. The two facts are the inevitable

\* Wardlaw's "Theology," p. 200.

outcome of thought—there is such a thing as cause, and there is no effect without cause.

A corollary of this is, that the cause must be equal to the effect; or, there can be nothing in the effect the Causes must be equal to their effects. adequate power to produce which was not antecedently in the cause. This is after all debate the intuitive belief of mankind, and is laid down as a truth in the last results of philosophic inquiry.

There has been a species of philosophizing which attempts to disconnect power from substance, or to resolve what we call substance into abstract force, but it is vain as the attempt to eliminate cause. There is no force that is not quality of some species of being. Active force is exerted by some thing or person, and has no existence apart from that which exerts it. Its effects appear within the being itself or in other beings upon which the force is exerted. There must be a *nexus*, though we cannot trace it.

Rousseau says: “The first causes of motion are not inherent in matter—the latter receives and imparts, but does not originate the former. The more I observe how the Rousseau's view of the one cause. forces of nature act and reach upon each other, the more clearly do I see that, as we ascend through a long succession of effects resulting from preceding effects, we are always obliged to recognize some WILL as the first cause; for to suppose an infinite series of causes is tantamount to supposing no cause at all. In a word, every movement not a product of another movement can only arise from some spontaneous, voluntary act. The only act of inanimate bodies is movement; and since there can be no real action without volition, the movement of these bodies must be the consequence of volition. This is my first principle. I believe then, that some WILL moves the universe and animates nature. This is my first doctrinal point, or article of faith.



“If matter in motion indicates a *will*, matter moving in accordance with determinate laws indicates an intelligence. This is my second article of faith. Acting, comparing, and selecting are operations which mark an active and thinking being; then such a being exists.” \*

On causality I give a brief extract from Hamilton:† “When  
Hamilton on causality. we are aware of something which begins to be, we are, by the necessity of our intelligence, constrained to believe that it has a cause. But what does the expression, that *it has a cause*, signify? If we analyze our thought, we shall find that it simply means that as we cannot conceive any new existence to commence, therefore all that now is seen to arise under a new appearance had previously an existence under a prior form. We are utterly unable to realize in thought the possibility of the complement of existence being either increased or diminished. We are unable, on the one hand, to conceive nothing becoming something, or on the other, something becoming nothing. When God is said to create out of nothing, we construe this to thought by supposing that he evolves existence out of himself. We view the Creator as the cause of the universe. ‘*Ex nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil posse reverti*,’ expresses in its purest form the whole intellectual phenomenon of causality.”

“The principle that every event should have its cause, is necessary and universal, and is imposed on us as a condition of our human intelligence itself.”

“The common doctrine of cause includes the following points. (1) A cause is something. It has a real existence. It is not merely a name for a certain relation. It is a  
Hodge’s view quoted. real entity, a substance. This is plain because a non entity cannot act. If that which does not exist can be a

\* Voltaire and Rousseau, “Against the Atheists,” pp. 82–88.

† See Hamilton on Causality, found in his “Lectures on Metaphysics.”

cause, then nothing can produce something, which is a contradiction. (2) A cause must not only be something real, but it must have power or efficiency. There must be something in its nature to account for the effects which it produces. (3) This efficiency must be adequate; that is, sufficient and appropriate to the effect. That this is a true view of the nature of a cause is plain, (1) From our own consciousness. We are causes. We can produce effects. And all three of the particulars above mentioned are included in our consciousness of ourselves as cause. We are real existences; we have power; we have power adequate to the effects which we produce. (2) We can appeal to the universal consciousness of men. All men attach this meaning to the word cause in their ordinary language. All men assume that every effect has an antecedent to whose efficiency it is due. They never regard mere antecedence, however uniform in the past, or however certain in the future, as constituting a causal relation. The succession of the seasons has been uniform in the past, and we are confident that it will continue uniform in the future; yet no man says that winter is the cause of summer. Every one is conscious that cause expresses an entirely different relation from that of mere antecedence. (3) This view of the nature of causation is included in the universal and necessary belief, that every effect must have a cause. That belief is not that one thing must always go before another thing; but that nothing can occur, that no change can be produced, without the exercise of power or efficiency somewhere; otherwise something could come out of nothing." \*

"We have now got the idea of cause, with the preliminary considerations attaching to it. But now that we have got the idea of cause, or the principle of causation, comes the greatest distinction in the interpretation of the idea, upon which de-

\* Hodge, vol. i, p. 209.



pendes the issue whether we can apply it to constituting the proof of a God or not; whether we can raise a religious conclusion upon it or not; whether we can use it as the foundation upon which an eternal and supreme moral being can be shown to exist; or whether it is reducible to a barren and fruitless succession which ends in nothing. It is upon this question that the whole of the great metaphysical argument for the existence of a God from causation depends. We assert, that the whole of this argument is strictly extracted and evolved from the idea of a cause as it is naturally conceived and entertained in our minds; that it is simply the contents of that idea brought out, when by an act of the attention we have entered into the idea, and seen how it is constituted and what there is in it. On the other hand, this constitution of the idea is denied by the atheist; and he claims to hold it in such a sense as leads to no such conclusion.

“When we speak of a cause, and of the idea of the cause which we have in our minds, the question to be decided is, Does this idea demand finality, or is it satisfied by an infinite chain and series of causes? We assert, then, that this idea demands finality, and adopting the maxim, ‘*Causa causæ, causa causati,*’ we say that if a cause goes back to a further cause, then the first of these two causes is not a true and real cause, and does not satisfy the idea of a cause in our minds; and so on through ever so long a chain, until we come to a cause which has no further cause to which it goes back. This is our interpretation of the idea of cause; and we say that any other interpretation of the idea is a false one, and sets up a counterfeit cause instead of a real and true one. Let us examine what we do in our minds, in conceiving the idea of cause. First, we go back to a cause; the material want and ὀρεξις is a retrogressive *motion* of the mind. But just as the first part of the idea of cause is motion, so the last is rest; and both of these

are equally necessary to the idea of cause. And unless both of these are fulfilled in the ultimate position of our minds, we have not the proper idea of causation represented in our mind; but a law of thought is violated, that law which we obey in submitting to the relation of cause at all. In other words, a cause, exactly by the same necessity of thought by which on the one side it causes, on the other side must be uncaused; as it is the cause of its own effect, so it must itself be the effect of nothing. That is what I call the rest which the idea of cause demands. There is an end implied in the idea; as things move up to a cause, so at the cause there is an abrupt stop; and itself does not move back at all. It is not a whit more necessary to a real cause that it should be the cause of something else than that it should be uncaused itself; and without both of these elements alike represented in our idea we have not the true idea of a cause in our minds. And the alternative is either to decide upon rejecting the idea of *cause*, and ridding metaphysical nature and the world of mind altogether of it, or taking this idea of cause.

“But, thus understood, the idea of cause has only to be applied to this universe and it becomes the proof, immediately, of the existence of an eternal, original, and self-existent Being. For what are we to call that cause of the universe beyond which there is no further cause—the uncaused cause of the world—but this? The attributes of the first cause of the universe, indeed, must depend upon what the universe is; the cause must take its character and rank from what it causes. But that there must be an eternal, self-existent, unchangeable Being is certain.\* . . .

Bishop Wilberforce on cause.

“*A true cause is a first cause.* When the atheist throws the universe back upon an infinite series of mechanical causes he must be told that an infinite chain does not represent the idea

\* Bishop Wilberforce's “Faith and Free Thought,” pp. 19–21.



of cause; that it is a false conception, and a departure from the genuine principle of reason. An end is included in the very idea—a final rest and repose, beyond which there is no advance—an appetency for a cause precedes in the idea, but rest in a cause concludes it. . . .

“The idea of causation, applied to this universe, then, takes us up to an eternal, original, self-existing Being. For, ‘how much thought soever,’ says Clarke, in his ‘Demonstration of the Being of God,’ ‘it may require to demonstrate the other attributes of such a Being, . . . yet, as to its existence—that there is somewhat eternal, infinite, and self-existing, which must be the cause and original of all other things—this is one of the first and most natural conclusions that any man who thinks at all can form in his mind. . . . All things cannot possibly have arisen out of nothing, nor can they have depended on one another in an endless succession. . . . We are certain, therefore, of the being of a supreme independent cause—that there is something in the universe actually existing, the supposition of whose not existing plainly implies a contradiction.

“Kant agrees with Clarke up to this point in the argument. The cause employs material forces. He coincides with him in the necessity of an ultimate or first cause, as distinguished from an infinite chaos of causes. ‘The reason,’ he says, ‘is forced to seek somewhere its resting-point in the *regressus* of the conditional. . . . If something, whatever it may be, exists, it must be admitted that something exists necessarily. For the contingent exists only under the condition of another thing, as its cause, up to a cause that exists not contingently, and, precisely on this account, without condition necessarily. This is the argument wherever reason founds its progression to the original Being. . . . I can never complete the regression to the conditions of the existing, without admitting a necessary being.” \*

\* Bishop Wilberforce’s “Faith and Free Thought,” pp. 29, 30.

What are called natural forces, or forces observed in matter, are detected simply by uniformity of effects ; or, as Mr. Hume would denominate it, uniformity of precedence and sequence. No force is discerned by the senses. No eye sees gravitation, or chemical affinity, or magnetism, or <sup>Natural forces</sup> <sup>—what?</sup> thermal force, or mechanical force, or any force. What and all that we see is certain and invariable conjunction of facts. We see as a fact that all solid objects, when projected into the air, descend to the earth ; but we do not see the force which compels them to so descend, nor can we doubt that there is such a force any more than we could if it were an object of direct vision. The law we perceive—its perpetual and universal and unchangeable presence. It compels the descent in a velocity proportioned to the degree in which their specific gravity is greater than the specific gravity of the air itself. The mind demands a cause for this uniform mode of change or action in matter. It knows intuitively that there must be a permanent cause, and it names that cause gravity, or attraction of gravitation, by which, in more extended explanation, it means that there is an active attraction in matter which holds it to or toward a common center, which manifests itself always and necessarily. The uniformity of the fact is denominated a law, as showing a law. The same thing is true of all natural modes of the action of matter on matter. The whole material universe is bound together, and exists in its organic and inorganic forms by forces which inhere and manifest themselves permanently under suitable conditions. These forces directly account for all mutations and changes in the material frame of things—they are natural causes of natural effects. From this it appears that all material changes are effects which <sup>Evidence of</sup> <sup>mind force.</sup> imply the action of causational force ; and further, it appears that the entire frame of the material universe, at any moment of time and in every moment of its history, consists and has



consisted of material substance swayed according to a uniform law by inhering forces whose action upon and within the substance accounts for all mutations and changes. The force is observed to spring from the internal constitution of matter, and in turn to fashion all its manifold and multifarious forms, relations, and conditions. But we must not suppose that they owe their origin to the substance in which they play. However this might seem to be true, we shall find that it is not true. But it is true that there is no change in material forms which is not traceable to some permanent natural force or mind force.

The problem now before us is, Do these natural forces account for the material frame of the universe and the entire history of its mutations, and for *all other* facts known to us? In the two quantities, matter and inhering force, do we reach sole or ultimate cause? Before we proceed to discuss the first part of the question, let us attend for a moment to the second part—*all other* facts.

Are there other facts known to us, besides effects of forces acting permanently and necessarily within and upon matter? These natural forces we discover to be attraction of gravitation, centripetal and centrifugal, chemical, mechanical, vital, thermal, luminiferous, magnetic, electrical, and whatever other known and unknown forces, acting from and upon matter under suitable conditions, may exist. The characteristic of these, one and all, is, that they act invariably, permanently, and necessarily, under proper conditions. Do they include all that we know of being and force found in the world, or what we call nature? To this we must answer, No. We discover another variety of factor—*mind*. Though confessedly invisible, it is no more possible rationally to doubt the existence of this factor than it is to doubt the existence of gross matter itself. Its characteristics are unique. It is unlike matter in every partic-

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ular. Its power is manifold, and, as we shall see, it is a cause which, acting first within itself, acts thence outward upon material nature, affecting it, both as to its substance and laws, in ways which are impossible to matter itself. It controls and determines collocations of matter, and subjects its laws to its behests, working out results which it is impossible should otherwise take place. Its first form of activity is cognitive or intellectual—it perceives and knows the material beings and forces about it as they are and as they act. It is consciously not of them in kind, but a spectator of them—a student, How mind-force acts. an inquirer. It consciously exerts its powers in speculating about them, observing them, classifying them, ascertaining their relations to each other. Its constant aim is to master the problems what they are, whence they came, the end for which they exist. We know that there is such a factor as this as well—am I not justified in saying better—than we know that there are ledges of granite and skies full of sunshine. To cognition it adds the power of feeling. To feeling it adds the power of appreciation of the good, the beautiful, the true. It is peculiar in these as in many other respects; it is invisible, but that, indeed, is true of every power; it exerts power by will, that is, it sees an end which it desires to accomplish, a something in idea which it wishes should become real; it considers the problem in what way the thing can be brought about, if it is at all possible; then, having determined to cause it, that is, to act in order to its existence, it evolves itself as a will. It thus directly acts within and upon nature, but not by nature. Is the thing to be accomplished some change in material forms—the production of a watch, for instance, or a steamship? It cannot act directly, as the natural forces do, or according to any natural method. The thing it proposes is not within the methods of nature. Its mode of force, that is, will-force, is impotent to the direct production



of the end proposed. Of itself it could do nothing, but it finds one part of material nature immediately under its control, namely, the vital organism in which it itself is posited—a curious structure, fitted to carry out its determinations. To produce the changes it desires in material things, frequently objects widely separated must be brought together—contact, and the action of one form of materiality on another form, is absolutely necessary, for in no other way are material changes produced. To enable it to bring about this result, it finds its organism fitted up with means of locomotion and mechanical adjustments which are subject to the will. If the instruments in the organism are too fragile and delicate to produce the effects required, they, guided by skill, are enabled to elaborate other instruments of greater strength and fitness. We are all familiar with the whole thing. We know there is a factor which can do this. We know of no natural forces working according to fixed and necessary laws that can. We know that the factor first devises and determines as a mind and will. We know, then, that in some way which we cannot understand or explain, it sets the organism in all the variety of requisite motions to do its bidding. We know that it causes the feet to bear it to the point where its power needs to be exerted. We know that it causes the hand to execute its deft contrivance. We know that it is a fountain of free power, which emanates simply as will or command, of which, as cause, the whole world of human contrivance is a monument. Is there causation? Mr. Hume says not. What is the voice and consciousness of mankind? What is the testimony of the architecture, statuary, painting, learning of the world? Whence came commerce, manufacture, agriculture, all curious, useful, and ornamental inventions, all fabrics and wares and tools for field and house and work-shop; all elegances of the palace and all rude conveniences of the cot; all devices for comfort,

for health, for aggrandizement; all means of culture and refinement to the race? Were they not born in human thought and evolved by human will?

It is not improbable that it is by means of the consciousness we have of this will-power, and the effects we know to result from its exercise, that we acquire the idea of cause, and of its necessity to all changes whatever. Consciousness of power may suggest the idea of causality. Lord Brougham says, in harmony with this view:

“If no connection of succession had ever existed between our volitions and our movements, I do not see how the idea of power or causality could ever have been obtained by us, from any abstraction of the sequences of events. The idea of design or contrivance must in like manner have been wanting to us; and hence I cannot understand how, but for the consciousness of power, we could ever have been led to the belief in the existence of a first cause.” \*

Dr. Reid advocates the same view: “The only distinct conception,” he says, “which I can form of active power is, that it is an aptitude in a being by which he can do certain things if he wills.” And so, too, Mr. Morell, criticising Brown, says: “Brown’s first error on this subject is his overlooking our personal consciousness of effect, the true type of a cause, the legitimate verification of our idea of power. Views of Brougham, Reid, Brown, and others. Fraught with the instruction of this self-consciousness, we approach the wonders of nature with a new vision. We gaze upon the perpetual succession of movements and changes that are ever taking place around us; and what conviction do they at once suggest? Clearly this: that it is as much impossible for the mere skeleton of nature which we see by the eye to start forth into activity without some unseen power or force to animate it, as it is for the arm we call our own to act without the energy of the will.” Lord Brougham again: “We

\* “A Discourse of Natural Theology,” p. 231.



feel that we have a will and a power ; that we can move a limb, and effect by our own power, exerted upon our own volition, a change upon external objects. Now, from this consciousness we derive the idea of power ; and we transfer this idea, and the relation on which it is founded between our own will and the change which is produced, to the relation between events wholly external to ourselves, assuming them to be connected, as we feel that our volitions and movements are mutually connected."

We cannot doubt that this is a true explanation of the genesis of the idea of power and causation, which, so soon as it is introduced, discovers to the mind the great intuitive truth that no change is or can be effected without the exertion of adequate power. This belief holds every mind with the iron grasp of necessity. From this it also appears that all power is metaphysical, and that what we call natural forces are but so many permanent and fixed methods of the operation of a great all-

The all-pervading power is that of will, showing the action of mind.

pervading will power. This will appear more fully in future discussions, when we consider ultimate cause. For the present, here we rest it ; assuming, as the starting-point of our argument, simply the great intuitional truth which lies at the base of all reasoning and thought, without which it is impossible to predicate a philosophy of any kind—for every effect there must be a cause ; that is, the movement of a power from some being by which change is produced, declaring a connection between the two events, not simply of precedence and sequence, but of such kind that the sequence owes its existence to the antecedent, and has no other basis of possible existence but by it. The intuition has such hold of us, that when we behold any change, the slightest possible, though we cannot discover any antecedent, we predicate of it as a necessity just as confidently and by as absolute a necessity as if we had observed it, or were con-

scious of it. No argument can be framed to shake our certainty in the case. It comes into our consciousness among the earliest of our beliefs, and grows more ineradicable with every added experience, until to root it up would be to overthrow mentality itself.

When, on the appearance of any change, we instinctively pronounce it to have a cause, what do we really mean? Do we affirm merely that some other thing has gone before the observed phenomenon? Is priority the constitutive element of our intellectual judgment? Is it not rather something quite different? Is not our judgment characteristically to this effect—that some other thing has not only preceded but produced the change we contemplate? Nay, is it not this element of production that we peculiarly mean to express in the use of the term “cause?” Succession is no doubt also involved, but it is not the relation of succession with which the mind, in the supposed judgment, is directly and initially concerned, but rather the relation of power. That when we speak of cause and effect we express merely the relation of conjunction between phenomena of antecedence and consequence in any defined sense, is something of which no ingenuity of sophistry will ever be able to persuade the common mind. It matters not in the least degree that it can be so clearly proved that nothing intervenes between the simple facts observed, that all we see is the sequence of the phenomena. This is not the dispute. Only the intellectual common-sense insists on recognizing a deeper relation among phenomena than mere sequence. It accepts the order of succession which it is the special function of science to trace every-where to its most general expression; but it moreover says of this order, that it is throughout produced, or, in other words, that it is only explicable as involving a further element of power. That this is really the import of the intellectual judgment which we pro-

Antecedence  
and succession  
not cause.



nounce in speaking of cause and effect—to which the very words themselves testify in an unmistakable manner, is so clear that it is now admitted by every school of philosophy which does not rest on a basis of materialism, and has even been conceded by writers of this school, however irresolvable on their principles.

Causation, therefore, implies power. What we mean by a cause is something quite different from a mere antecedent, however we may define the conditions of its relation to the consequent. It is peculiarly an agent. But in order to see this more fully, it will be necessary to consider still further and more particularly whence we have the idea of power which we have seen to constitute the main element of causation.

That this idea is not derived from without—that it does not come through any phase of sensational experience—is already clear in the fact, admitted on all hands, that we only perceive  
 Power ema-    succession; that we are only conversant, through  
 nates from  
 mind.        the senses, with the two terms of sequence. But,  
 if not from without, it must be from within; we must have the idea of power given us in our mental experience. This we hold to be the fact; and recent psychological analysis has pretty sufficiently explained the more special origin of this prime intellectual element. It flows from the depth of our self-consciousness; or, more truly speaking, it is nothing else than the ideal projection of our self-consciousness. With the first dawn of mind we apprehend ourselves as distinct from the objective phenomena surrounding us; the ego emerges face to face with the non-ego. And in this springing forth of self, so far back in the mental history as to elude all trace, is primarily given the idea of power. What is called the will, therefore, is, according to this view, the ultimate source or foundation of the notion of causation. We apprehend ourselves as agents, and in this apprehension we have already, in the fullest sense,

the idea of cause. Had we not this apprehension, it seems impossible that we could have ever risen above sequence as the obvious fact given us in outward observation. With this apprehension lying at the very root of our being, and constituting it essentially, it is equally impossible that we can hold by that fact as furnishing the exhaustive conception of the universe. According to the radical and imperative character of our mental constitution, we *must* recognize a deeper life than mere sequence, however grand and orderly, in the phenomena of nature; and this deeper life is just what we mean by a cause. Not sequence, therefore, but agency or efficiency is the attribute commensurate with our notion of causation.

The question before us, then, really passes into the old one as to the origin of our knowledge. Let it only be admitted that our knowledge is the product of a spir- The old question of knowledge again considered. itual as well as a material factor, and then it is quite beside the question to argue that because cause, according to our interpretation of it, is not given in external nature, the notion of it is not a valid and real portion of human knowledge; on the very contrary, it becomes, in such a case, only an obvious and expected conclusion that we should find more in outward phenomena than they, so to speak, contain.

The subjective brings its element of knowledge as well as the objective; and it is not merely what we apprehend by the senses, but what, through the whole mental life awakened in us by the original contact of subject and object, spirit and matter, we intuitively know or believe to be the truth, that we must hold as the truth. The only available argument against this position, save on a basis of mere materialism, would be to dispute the reality of any such primitive mental experience as we have asserted—the fact of that consciousness of agency which we have assumed as indisputable.

It is of great importance that the view which we have thus



endeavored to set forth should be comprehended in its precise import, with reference both to certain objections which have been urged against it and to the final conclusion to which it seems to us to lead.

It will be observed that we trace the idea of causation, in its primitive origin, to our self-consciousness, our apprehension of ourselves as distinct activities, not carried away in, but exercising a reaction upon, the flow of physical sequences. This apprehension, in its most obscure form, involves what has been specially called the will. The apprehension of ourselves is, and can be nothing else than, the apprehension of our personal voluntary activity. In its most mature and developed form this apprehension becomes what is called the consciousness of free will. The causal idea, however, is not dependent on any particular manifestations of this highest form of our activity. It is already present in its dawn in our primitive self-consciousness. It awakens side by side with the ego; and is therefore truly, as Cousin calls it, "the primary idea."

The clear perception of this will do away with some difficulties from the view exhibited. It has been represented, for example, as if the advocates of the theory of efficient causation held the notion to be given altogether independently of experience in the very conception of voluntary action, apart from its exercise. They have been held as maintaining that the Energy of will "feeling of energy or force inherent in an act of not foreknowledge. will is knowledge *a priori*; assurance prior to experience that we have the power of causing effects."

But, so far as we understand this statement at all, it seems to us to imply something which could not well be deliberately maintained by any one, however an incautious use of expressions may have led the writer to suppose so. It certainly implies something which we are so far from maintaining that it appears to us to be simply absurd and inconceivable. To speak

of any mental possession as prior to or independent of experience, in the right and comprehensive meaning of that term is to speak of something which, in the nature of things, is impossible. Our consciousness only comes into being under experienced conditions.

All our mental life only arises under them; and of what it would be or contain apart from them we can have no conception. Of an assurance prior to experience—that we have the power of causing effects—we therefore know nothing. Experience is already present in the first act of con-  
Knowledge the result of experience only.

sciousness, and our idea of cause flows from the primitive awakening of consciousness under the contact of experience. It is already given in the primary apprehension of our personal existence. It may, therefore, certainly be held before the mind apart from special results; but apart from voluntary activity, as such, and in a true sense, it is inconceivable.

Again, with reference to a special objection of more importance, the view we have presented seems to render it inapplicable. The objection in question deserves examination, as having been taken up by Sir W. Hamilton, and urged by him against our doctrine. The weakness, however, which Sir William assails successfully, does not lie in the doctrine itself, but only in the special statement of it which is the subject of his criticism.

This statement is that of a distinguished French philosopher, M. de Biran, who has certainly the merit of having, Biran's theory of causation. in the most elaborate manner, fixed attention on the theory of causation under discussion. It is to this effect: "I will to move my arm, and I move it." This complex fact gives us an analysis: 1. The consciousness of an act of will; 2. The consciousness of motion produced; 3. The consciousness of a relation of the motion to the volition. This relation



is in no respect a simple relation of succession. The motion not merely follows our will, or appears in conjunction with it, but it is consciously produced by it. The idea of power or cause is thus evolved. Sir W. Hamilton objects to the theory thus laid down, that the empirical fact on which it is founded is incorrect. "For," he says, "between the overt fact of corporeal movement which we perceive, and the internal fact of the will to move, of which we are self-conscious, there intervenes a series of intermediate agencies, of which we are wholly unaware; consequently, we can have no consciousness, as this hypothesis maintains, of any causal connection between the extreme links of this chain—that is, between the volition to move and the arm moving."

The same objection to the general doctrine is hinted at by Mill and Hume's objections stated. Mr. Mill, and stated fully, and with all his usual ingenuity, by Hume, in his famous chapter on the idea of "necessary connection." Now, it is not to be disputed that the point upon which this objection rests is indubitable, namely, that it is only through the intermediate agencies of the nerves and muscles that the act of volition goes forth in corporeal movement. Volitions produce nervous action, and this action again expresses itself in outward movement. We have not, therefore, and cannot have, any proper consciousness of this movement. The volition or act of will itself is all of which we are properly conscious. But in this act, as we conceive, we have already sufficient basis for our theory. For what is this simple movement of the will but the ego expressing itself? And in this original act of self-expression we have already, according to our view, the idea of cause.

Will it be said, that apart from resultant motion or special activity we could have no evidence of such self-expression? It may be readily granted that had we possessed no experience of volition passing into activity; had, in truth, the present

constitution of things been entirely different from what it is—for this is really what is asserted—in such a supposed case there is no certainty that we could have had such evidence, or that, which is the same thing, volition could have been to us any longer a fact. We cannot tell; we have simply again to reply that we pretend to no elements of knowledge apart from experience in the sense here intended. All we know is, and can be, only known to us within the con- Knowledge the resultant of experience. dition of our actual being; in other words, within the sphere of experience. What we might or might not have known out of this sphere it is utterly idle to conjecture, as we cannot, in the nature of the case, transcend it, and survey ourselves from a point above it. Thus, in the present case, the sense of will or power is to us a fact given in the first dawn of self-consciousness, and repeated in every moment of self-consciousness. It is implied in every forth-putting of our being. It lies at its root, and our whole mental life is only a continual passing of it into activity. That which is specially called the will is, as already represented, implicitly contained in this original affirmation of self, in which all our knowledge begins. Special acts of freedom are merely special manifestations of a power quickened in us, or, more truly, which constitutes us (the me) from the first. It is by no means necessary, therefore, that we should be directly conscious of corporeal movement as the special result of an act of volition, in the sense set forth by M. de Biran, and questioned by Sir W. Hamilton and others, before we can attain the idea of cause. This idea enters far more deeply into our spiritual life than is thus implied; and is quite independent of such special realizations as are here connected with it.

Let us review, then, the conclusion at which we have arrived—the meaning of causation as thus determined.

A “cause” we have found to be coincident with an agent—  
VOL. II.—13



to have its primitive type in the ego, the living root of our being—and to be specially represented in that which constitutes the highest expression of our being, free will. A cause, therefore, implies mind. More definitely, and in its full conception, it implies a rational will. Let this conclusion be fairly pon-

The conclu-  
sion drawn  
should be well  
considered.

dered and it will be found to sustain itself irrefragably. The ego, which in its first dawn and highest life alone gives us the idea of cause, is simply the rational being which we call by the name of mind. More definitely, and in its full conception, it implies a rational will.

It is this being, no doubt, apprehended predominantly on the side of activity. But this activity, apart from the reason in which it inheres, and which it expresses, is nothing. We can never subtract the one element and leave the other. We have been in the habit, indeed, of speaking of different mental faculties; but the mind is really one, and not a separable congeries of power. Free will is, and can be, nothing else therefore than the highest or consummate expression of our rational being or mind; and a rational will, the only fully answering idea to that of cause. The one idea is the only commensurate of the other. The latter only exhausts itself and finds rest in the former.

We shall now be able to understand the true character of the causation which we apprehend in nature. In the light of our spiritual consciousness we every-where perceive in nature a deeper meaning than it contains. We apprehend a living power in its continual flow. This is the general expression of what reason demands. It never stops short of this. But already it contains a higher and more explicit truth. Already in its lowest indications it points to one original, comprehending will. The savage or childish apprehension of nature, as animated in its different movements by separate voluntary agents like ourselves, is a mere dim and temporary expression of the

rational necessity — which knows no satisfaction till, driven upward, it rests in the idea of an all-pervading power—an ultimate cause.

According to this whole view, there is no such thing as mere physical causation. What is so denominated is of course a reality; but inasmuch as it is only in virtue <sup>No mere physical causation.</sup> of our spiritual life that we could ever find a cause in nature, this term is truly inapplicable to physical phenomena *per se*: nature cannot give what it does not contain. Physical causes, apart from the idea of a will in which they originate, and which they manifest, have no meaning. Remove the one idea and the other disappears. It is assuredly only in the reflection of a power beyond them, and in which they are contained, that such causes are or can be to us any thing but antecedent phenomena.

It is only as the expression of such a will or power that the physical order of the universe is recognized as caused. And this recognition is truly ineradicable and necessary; in no way affected by the discoveries of science; still asserting itself by the side of the most extended of these discoveries. Let science expose the domain of physical order as it may, will is still present as its implicate and only explanation. And this will, according to what we have already said, is no mere naked potentiality. We know nothing of will apart from reason; the one is to us merely the peculiarly active, the other the peculiarly intelligent side of the same spiritual energy. They unite and form one in what we comprehensively call mind, which we therefore recognize as the only adequate source and explanation of the universe.

It will be observed that we have confined ourselves to the fact of causation—what it implies. Our aim has been to find a true and final explanation of what we mean by a “cause.”

“The principle of causality, in its characteristics of irresisti-  
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bleness and necessity, has been rather assumed than dealt with, and rightly so, for the principle, under one form of explanation or another, cannot be said to be in dispute. The real and important subject of dispute is unquestionably what the principle—admitted to be one which conditions human intelligence—involves. What is its import? Does it lead us upward merely from one link of sequences to another; or does it necessitate our finding, in all sequences, a higher element in which alone they inhere? Is cause, in short, antecedence or power? This is the essential question, and it is this to which we have endeavored to give an answer.”

The old triangular contest between atheism, theism and deism, which raged during the last two preceding centuries, was not a drawn battle, or one that hung in doubtful scale even. There was never one more ably contested. It drew out the greatest minds of that or any preceding age to their utmost strength, on two or all three sides, and all involved issues, whether theological or scientific. Theism was the acknowledged victor. The aspects of the question and peculiar forms of the issues then discussed will never again be able to excite a combat. They were settled once for all. The settlement was not cheaply made. The fate of Christianity was in the issue. It won its right to live, not by refusing the gauge of battle, not by a blind faith in destiny, but wrenched it from the jaws of the destroyer by the strength and valor of its champions and the adequacy of its arguments. The contest and the issue put Christianity on a new footing; and for more than a hundred years left it free and strong for the propagation of its mission at home and among distant nations, during which it has steadily advanced, carrying all human interests forward with it to a pitch never before attained. Learning respected it. Power paid homage to it. Beneath its ægis liberty flourished. Under its beneficent sway humanity

advanced. It was recognized as Heaven's greatest boon to man. Its final possession of the world was conceded as certain, and was looked forward to as the millennium of peace, as the consummation of good.

A new age has come. With the new age and new facts new issues have arisen, or old issues under new forms. Again Christendom bristles with arms, and the world, to its widest rim, feels the shock of combat. Again it is the question, Have we a God? Have we a divine religion? The battle must be fought over once more, not on old but on new issues and with new arguments. The Christianity which has made the age illustrious—which has led forth the race to a pitch of destiny hitherto undreamed of—which has freed mind from the thralldom of ignorance and superstition—which has founded and patronized learning—which has cemented the brotherhood of mankind—which has softened the asperities of existence and robed it with the amenities of charity—which has taught virtue and morality—which has inspired hope and pointed the way to happiness—which has given to man the idea of home, of chastity, of just laws, of mutual helpfulness, and has enriched him with the idea of the dignity of existence, of the fatherhood of God, of his own filial relation to him, of the brotherhood of man, of an immortal life after death—a Christianity which teaches love and peace and purity and helpfulness—which condemns wrong and oppression and cruelty—which seeks and promises to bring in universal welfare: this Christianity is called again, by the sons she has nurtured and reared to greatness of intellectual power, and supplied with appliances unknown to former ages, to vindicate her right to exist, and to verify the doctrines which have made her the benefactor and saviour of men. Like her divine Founder, she stands to-day arrayed in mock robes, with a circle of thorns about her head,

The theistic  
doctrine the  
gainer.



the subject of buffeting and of reproach—of gnashing of teeth and of scorn amid the altars and temples she has reared.

Once more her loyal sons are called to go forth to the glorious war for truth and righteousness. The victories of truth, always beneficent, are never easy. Divine as she is, her triumphs are always won with difficulty. The Prince of life himself must needs ascend the cross before he could ascend his throne. God puts honor on heroism. He hides his richest treasures that men may grow great in acquiring them. He permits trial that he may inaugurate triumph. Already the struggle has added to our wealth. We have more truth than ever before. We shall have more yet. The refining process is helpful. The gold will be purer for the severity of the assay.

If the present assault is the most formidable Christianity has ever been called to meet, as we do not doubt is the fact, we also do not doubt that she is stronger for the contest than at any period of her history. Her genius is better understood, her defenses better compacted and comprehended, and her resources ampler than ever. The jury that is to sit in judgment is better able to adjudicate her claim than any that could have been assembled at any former time. The triumph that is sure to ensue will be both more signal and more significant—the precursor of the final victory of truth over error and the universal conquest of the world to Emanuel, Prince of peace. So we believe, and, so believing, throw out our banner to the breeze.

Antitheism has rarely attempted any thing of the nature of an argument. In any form it has assumed it has rather been

Antitheism not clear or positive in its teachings. a denial of the theistic theory than any attempt to refute it. It has, as we believe, utterly failed by argument either to construct a satisfactory theory or to destroy that which it antagonizes. The matter to be

accounted for is the existence of the universe. Theism accounts for it by postulating an eternal, intelligent, all-powerful personal cause. The theory has been opposed on various grounds, and some distinguished names have labored to invalidate and overthrow it; but chiefly the appeal has been to prejudice and passion, and the effort has been to excite hate against it by characterizing—or more properly caricaturing—it as a fable, a superstition, an invention of priests, and by the use of other opprobrious epithets. Two labored arguments have been hurled against it, which in one way and another have furnished the staple of all modern assault.

The first was invented by Hume on the doctrine of cause. J. Stuart Mill, selecting the same point of assault, but varying the method, has more recently invented the most ingenious and powerful attack ever made. It is in his essay in denial of a first cause. The second was formulated, though not originated, by Sir W. Hamilton, and improved and carried to its highest expression by Dean Mansel and Herbert Spencer. It is the argument to prove that personality is a contradictory predicate to the idea of the infinite and unconditioned, which is the postulate of theism. Whatever may have been true of Spencer, it is certain that neither Hamilton nor Mansel employed the argument in intentional support of atheism—for they never failed to assert their theism. Nevertheless the arguments made use of by the three have doubtless tended to weaken and undermine the theistic citadel, and have confused and perplexed many devout believers.

The doctrine of evolution, as invented by Lamarck and improved by the anonymous author of “*Vestiges of Creation*,” now known to be Dr. Chambers of Edinburgh, and perfected by Darwin, and the materialism which has grown around it as expressed by many scientists, has had the same general tendency, so that antitheism has recently become a nearer approach



to a thought-system than at any former time. It must now be dealt with as such.

These several forms of argumentation of antitheism will be carefully reviewed, and their fallacies pointed out.

In the most carefully formulated attack ever yet made against the argument from a first cause, John Stuart Mill says: "Every thing that we know, it is argued, had a cause,

and owed its existence to that cause. How, then, can it be but that the world, which is but a name for the aggregate of all that we know, has a cause to which it is indebted for its existence?"

Mill's argu-  
ment against a  
first cause re-  
futed.

*Either ignorantly or disingenuously, Mr. Mill misstates at the very opening of his argument the issue on the question of causation. It can hardly be through ignorance. In this he is followed by "Physicus." Now, it is not true that it is argued that every thing of which we know had a cause; on the contrary, it is constantly affirmed by all who argue that the universe had a cause, or who argue for cause at all, that there must be some being who had no cause, that is, the first, and, in the deepest sense, the only cause. The position invariably taken is, that every effect, that is, every thing that has beginning, has a cause. He also, in this opening sentence, slips in the affirmation that the world (by which we suppose he means the cosmos) is but a name for the aggregate of all that we know. Now, the world is not the only thing of which we know. We know also that there is a cause of the world distinct from the world, and that, if it had not existed, this world never could have existed.*

On this mistake in the opening sentence he builds his argument. Mr. Mill discovers his mistake, and goes on to say:

"The fact of experience, however, when correctly expressed, turns out to be, not that every thing which we know derives its existence from a cause, but only every event or change.

There is in nature a permanent element, and also a changeable; the changes are always the effect of previous changes; the permanent existences, so far as we know, are not effects at all. . . . That which in an object begins to exist is that in it which belongs to the changeable element in nature—the outward form, and the properties depending on mechanical or chemical combinations of its component parts. There is in every object another and a permanent element, namely, the specific elementary substance or substances of which it consists, and their inherent properties. These are not known to us as beginning to exist; within the range of human knowledge they had no beginning, consequently no cause; though they themselves are causes, or con-causes of every thing that takes place. Experience, therefore, furnishes no evidence, not even analogies, to justify our extending, to the apparently immutable, a generalization grounded only on our observation of the changeable.

“As a fact of experience, then, causation cannot legitimately be extended to the material universe itself, but only to its changeable phenomena; of these, indeed, cause may be affirmed without any exception. But what cause? The cause of every change is a prior change; and such it cannot but be, for if there were no new antecedent there would not be a new consequent. If the state of facts which brings the phenomenon into existence had existed always, or for an indefinite duration, the effect also would have existed always or been produced an indefinite time ago. It is thus a necessary part of the fact of causation, within the sphere of our experience, that the causes as well as the effects had a beginning in time, and were themselves caused. It would seem, therefore, that our experience, instead of furnishing an argument for a first cause, is repugnant to it; and the very essence of causation, as it exists within the limits of our knowledge, is incompatible with a first cause.”



The conclusion reached is a most remarkable one; namely, that since causes in nature are themselves effects of antecedent causes, therefore there is no evidence of a first cause. The conclusion we should reach is diametrically opposed to this. It is this: That inasmuch as the causes of change in nature are themselves effects of former similar causes, therefore it is evident that among these causes it is impossible there should be a first cause; but since no series can be uncaused or unbegun, there must be a cause back of the series, which is the first, and which originated the series, and was not itself caused. So far is it from being true that the essence of causation is incompatible with a first cause, the essence of causation requires a first cause as an absolute necessity. And it requires, further, that that first cause should be eternal, not in *de facto* causation, which is a contradiction, but in being and in adequacy of perfections to become the real and only cause of all subsequent effects, in such manner that but for him there never could have been any effects whatever. Mr. Mill was too astute not to perceive the predicament into which his reasonings plunged him. He seeks to extricate himself thus:

“But it is necessary to look more particularly into the matter, and analyze more closely the nature of the causes of which mankind have experience. For, if it should turn out that though all causes have a beginning, there is in all of them a permanent element which had no beginning, this permanent element may, with some justice, be termed a first or universal cause, inasmuch as, though not sufficient of itself to cause any thing, it enters as a con-cause into all causation. Now, it happens that the last result of physical inquiry derived from the converging evidences of all branches of physical science does, if it holds good, land us, so far as the material world is concerned, in a result of this sort. Whenever a physical phenomenon is traced to its cause, that cause, when analyzed, is found to be a

certain quantum of force combined with certain collocations. And the last great generalization of science, the conservation of force, teaches us that the variety in the effects depends partly upon the amount of the force and partly upon the diversity of the collocations. The force itself is essentially one and the same; and there exists of it in nature a fixed quantity, which, if the theory be true, is never increased or diminished. Here, then, we find, even in the changes of material nature, a permanent element; to all appearances the very one of which we are in quest. This it is, apparently, to which, if to any thing, we must assign the character of first cause, the cause of the material universe. For all effects may be traced up to it, while it cannot be traced up, by our experience, to any thing beyond; its transformations alone can be so traced, and of them the cause always includes the force itself; the same quantity of force in some previous form. It would seem, then, that in the only sense in which experience supports in any shape the doctrine of a first cause, namely, as the primeval and universal element in all causes, the first cause can be no other than force."

Here, again, is a remarkable conclusion, namely, that since there must be some permanent reality in nature behind change, in this permanent reality, which is matter and force, we have the very cause that is the original or first cause for which we seek! Now, here is the admission of a first cause—the primal source of change, namely, force—in direct contradiction of the statement just before made that it is of the essence of causation that there should be no first cause. But the remarkable thing is that so astute a mind should allege that force is the cause for which we seek, or which the effect requires, not perceiving that this is impossible for two reasons; first, force, which necessarily acts, must always have acted, but since its action is to produce change, and since all change must be in time, it is certain that there must have been a beginning to the

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action of the force; and as there must be a beginning, there must be a cause behind it, which is the true first cause. Second, mere force is unintelligent, but the series of changes imply intelligence, and, therefore, force cannot be the cause for which we seek.

Mill was too acute not to perceive this, and so he alludes to the fact that mind must be the first mover; and contents himself with saying it is an old idea, without attempting to answer it.

And so he goes on to say: "We are, however, by no means at the end of the question. On the contrary, the greatest stress of the argument is exactly at the point which we have now reached. For it is maintained that mind is the only possible cause of force; or rather, perhaps, that mind is a force, and that all other forces must be derived from it, inasmuch as mind is the only thing which is capable of originating change. This is said to be the lesson of human experience. In the phenomena of inanimate nature the force which works is always a pre-existing force, not originated but transmitted. One physical object moves another by giving out to it the force by which it has first been itself moved. . . . In voluntary action we alone see a commencement, an origination, of motion. Since all other causes seem incapable of this origination, experience is in favor of the conclusion that all the motion in existence owed its beginning to this one cause, voluntary agency—if not of man then of a more powerful Being.

"This argument is a very old one. . . . And it is still one of the most telling arguments with the more metaphysical class of defenders of natural theology." To answer this, Mill introduces the recent doctrine of the conservation of forces, and asserts that the will must be under the universal law; that is, each volition is simply a transformation of the common force, and, like every other change, is itself a necessitated effect

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or force; that is, of the total amount of force in existence, which is a permanent and unvarying quantity, but transmutable. His language is surprising; it is:

“Now, in the first place, if there be truth in the doctrine of the conservation of force—in other words, the constancy of the total amount of force in existence—this doctrine does not change from true to false when it reaches the field of voluntary agency. The will does not, any more than other causes, create force. Granting that it originates motion, it has no means of doing so but by converting into that particular manifestation a portion of force which already existed in other forms. It is known that the source from which this portion of force is derived is chiefly or entirely the force evolved in the processes of chemical composition and decomposition, which constitute the body of nutrition: the force so liberated becomes a fund upon which every muscular, and even every merely nervous action, as of the brain in thought, is a draft. It is in this sense only that, according to the best lights of science, volition is an originating cause. Volition, therefore, does not answer to the idea of a first cause; since force must, in every instance, be assumed as prior to it; and there is not the slightest color, derived from experience, for supposing force itself to have been created by volition. As far as any thing can be concluded from human experience, force has all the attributes of a thing eternal and uncreated.

“This, however, does not close the discussion. For, though whatever verdict experience can give in the case is against the possibility that will ever originates force, yet if we can be assured that neither does force originate will, will must be held to be an agency, if not prior to force yet co-eternal with it; and if it be true that will can originate, not indeed force, but the transformation of force from some other of its manifestations into that of mechanical motion, and that there is within



human experience no other agency capable of doing so, the argument for a will as the origination, though not of the universe yet of the cosmos, or order of the universe, remains unanswered.

“But the case thus stated is not conformable to fact. Whatever volition can do in the way of creating motion out of other forms of force, and generally of evolving force from a latent into a visible state, can be done by many other causes. Chemical action, for instance; electricity, heat, the mere presence of a gravitating body; all these are causes of mechanical motion on a far larger scale than any volitions which experience presents to us; and in most of the effects thus produced the motion given by one body to another is not, as in the ordinary cases of mechanical action, motion that has first been given to that other by some third body. The phenomenon is not a mere passing on of mechanical motion, but a creation of it out of force previously latent, or manifesting itself in some other form. Volition, therefore, regarded as an agent in the material universe, has no exclusive privileges of origination; all that it can originate is also originated by other transforming agents.”

Here, again, is a remarkable declaration not to be accounted for except upon stress of necessity; namely, that there are other forces that can produce all the effects that will can. Now, by will Mill could mean nothing less than mind. But is it true that any other force can do what mind can do? Can chemistry think? can it propose to act? can it deliberate action? can it order a series of changes for the accomplishment of preconceived ends? or can any known natural force or so-called force of matter do these things?

Mr. Mill was too discerning not to perceive the dilemma, and so he proceeds: “If it be said that those other agents must have had the force they give out put into them from elsewhere, I answer that this is no less true of the force which

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volition disposes of. We know that this force comes from an external source—the chemical action of the food and air. The force by which the phenomena of the material world are produced circulates through all physical agencies in a never-ending though sometimes intermitting stream. I am, of course, speaking of volition only in its action on the material world. We have nothing to do here with the freedom of the will itself as a mental phenomenon—with the *vexata quæstio* whether volition is self-determining or determined by causes. To the question now in hand it is only the effects of volition that are relevant, not its origin. The assertion is, that physical nature must have been produced by a will, because nothing but will is known to us as having the power of originating the production of phenomena. We have seen that, on the contrary, all the power that will possesses over phenomena is shared, as far as we have the means of judging, by other and much more powerful agents, and that in the only sense in which those agents do not originate neither does will originate. No prerogative, therefore, can, on the ground of experience, be assigned to volition above other natural agents as a producing cause of phenomena. All that can be affirmed by the strongest asserter of the freedom of the will is, that volitions are themselves uncaused, and are therefore alone fit to be the first or universal cause. But even assuming volitions to be uncaused, the properties of matter, so far as experience discloses, are uncaused also, and have the advantage over any particular volition, in being, so far as experience can show, eternal. Theism, therefore, in so far as it rests on the necessity of a first cause, has no support from experience.”

How strange all this seems to one who is inclined to give Mr. Mill credit for acuteness and sincerity. To the postulate that will is primal cause, he deems it sufficient to answer that volition is itself caused, and then hides himself from the dis-



cussion or explanation of the freedom of will, which is the only thing involved.

His assumption that "all the power which will possesses over phenomena is shared, as far as we have means of knowing, by other and much more powerful agents, and that in the only sense in which they do not originate neither does will originate," he must have written with a conscious protest. Did he not know that will, for by it he means mind, perceives an end, desires an end, commences an action? Did he not know that volitions are not uncaused, but are themselves product of eternal mind; and as being free, that is, as being the exercise of a free power, differ from all other forces, and thus only become cause?

"To those who, in default of experience, consider the necessity of a first cause as a matter of intuition, I would say that it is needless in this discussion to contest their premises; since, admitting that there is and must be a first cause, it has now been shown that several other agencies than will can lay equal claim to that character. One thing only may be said which requires notice here. Among the facts of the universe to be accounted for, it may be said, is mind; and it is self-evident that nothing can have produced mind but mind.

"The special indications that mind is deemed to give, pointing to intelligent contrivance, belong to different portions of this inquiry. But if the mere existence of mind is supposed to require, as a necessary antecedent, another mind greater and more powerful, the difficulty is not removed by going one step back; the creating mind stands as much in need of another mind to be the source of its existence as the created mind. Be it remembered that we have no direct knowledge (at least apart from revelation) of a mind which is even apparently eternal, as force and matter are; an eternal mind is, as far as the present argument is concerned, a simple hypothesis to account for the

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minds which we know to exist. Now it is essential to an hypothesis that, if admitted, it should at least remove the difficulty and account for the facts. But it does not account for mind to refer one mind to a prior mind for its origin. The problem remains unsolved, the difficulty undiminished; nay, rather increased.”

Mind the author of mind as well as of matter.

This paragraph, if possible, is still more surprising than either of the foregoing. To the obvious matter that the existence of mind needs to be accounted for, and that mind only can account for mind, Mr. Mill deems it sufficient to reply, that if one mind must be accounted for so must all mind, and if one needs a cause so must all. Did not he know the weakness and misleading character of this statement? That which needs to be accounted for is mind that has a beginning. He has shown that he fully admitted that cause was not demanded for the permanent. To account for a mind that has beginning is not to account for a mind that had no beginning, but the admission of such a mind is necessary to account for mind that is caused, or that begins to be.

He perceives this, and so goes on to say: “To this it may be objected that the causation of every human mind is matter of fact, since we know that it had a beginning in time. For there is a vast amount of evidence that the state of our planet was once such as to be incompatible with animal life, and that human life is of very much more modern origin than animal life. In any case, therefore, the fact must be forced—that there must have been a cause which called the first human mind—nay, the very first germ of organic life—into existence. No such difficulty exists in the supposition of an eternal mind. If we did not know that mind on our earth began to exist, we might suppose it to be uncaused, and we may still suppose this of the mind to which we ascribe its existence.

“To take this ground,” he says, “is to return into the field



of human experience, and to become subject to its laws, and we are then entitled to ask, where is the proof that nothing can have caused a mind except another mind? From what, except from experience, can we know what can produce what? what causes are adequate to what effects? That nothing can *consciously* produce mind but mind is self-evident, being involved in the meaning of the words; but that there cannot be unconscious production must not be assumed, for it is the very point to be proved. Apart from experience, and arguing on what is called reason—that is, on supposed self-evidence—the notion seems to be, that no cause can give rise to products of a more precious or elevated kind than themselves. But this is at variance with the known analogies of nature. How vastly nobler and more precious, for instance, are the vegetables and animals than the soil and manure out of which, and by the properties of which, they are raised up. The tendency of all recent speculation is toward the opinion that the development of inferior orders of existence into superior, the substitution of greater elaboration and higher organization for lower, is the general rule of nature. Whether it is so or not, there are at least in nature a multitude of facts bearing that character, and this is sufficient for the argument.”

The problem is to account for mind. Mr. Mill gravely undertakes to do it by asserting that non-mind may be an adequate cause of mind; that a force which cannot think can create a being or force that does think; or an unconscious agent can produce a conscious subject; that there is no more difficulty in supposing a universe packed with thought and filled with thinkers to arise out of forces which cannot think, than to suppose an eternal thinker back of it, and putting his thought in it, and making creatures that can think. This will hardly commend itself. He cites certain cases, where the product seems to transcend the cause, in support of this

position; as, "how vastly nobler and more precious, for instance, are the vegetables and animals, than the soil and the manure out of which, and by the properties of which, they are raised up." This is even worse than Mr. Darwin. We trace our ancestry to the soil itself. How worse than trifling is all this!

"Here, then," Mill continues, "this part of the discussion may stop. The result it leads to is, that the first cause argument is in itself of no value for the establishment of theism; because no cause is needed for the existence of that which has no beginning; and both matter and force

The first cause theory does not of itself establish the truth of theism.

(whatever metaphysical theory we may give of the one or the other) have had, so far as our experience can teach us, no beginning—which cannot be said of mind. The phenomena of changes in the universe have, indeed, each of them a beginning and a cause, but their cause is always a prior change; nor do the analogies of experience give us any reason to expect, from the mere occurrence of changes, that if we would trace back the series far enough we should arrive at a primeval volition. The world does not, by its mere existence, bear witness to a God; if it gives indications of one, these must be given by the special nature of phenomena, by what they present that resembles adaptation to an end. If, in default of evidence from experience, the evidence of intuition is relied upon, it may be answered, that if mind, as mind, presents intuitive evidence of having been created, the creative mind must do the same, and we are no nearer to the first cause than before. But if there be nothing in the nature of mind which in itself implies a creator, the minds which have a beginning in time, as all minds have which are known to our experience, must indeed have been caused, but it is not necessary that their cause should have been a prior intelligence."\* This, then, is the demonstration

\* John Stuart Mill's "Three Essays on Religion," pp. 142, 154.



that there is no first cause, or, if a first cause, that it is simple matter and force. That the universe nowhere bears witness of a God!

Hume had the discernment to perceive that the doctrine of efficient cause involved the doctrine of a first cause, and laid thus a firm foundation for the theistic theory or notion of God. The only escape from the conclusion lay in the denial of efficient causes, or causation itself. It was a bold step, but he made the venture in the interest, he declared, of accuracy, though it was, in fact, atheistic—a theory which he constantly repudiated. His philosophy was atheistic, but he never confessed himself an atheist. But the same is true of Mansel and Hamilton and also Spencer. Their theories have been the stronghold of atheism, but themselves, especially Hamilton and Mansel, were pronounced theists. The axiom, that “for every effect there must be a cause,” Hume affirmed was an ungrounded assumption and no axiom at all. It was neither an intuitive knowledge nor a knowledge acquired by reasoning, or observation, or experience; nor a knowledge at all, but on the contrary was opposed to fact, as well as beyond knowledge. What was known, and all that was known or knowable, was that one thing followed another—that change followed change. That there was any thing in one change to produce another change, or any thing outside of the series of changes to produce them, he denied, as unproved and unsupported by reason. This conceit furnished a temporary rallying cry for skepticism—an atheistic booth or tent for a day; but, of course, could only last till the voice of calm reason could be heard above the wild uproar of unreasoning clamor. The silly dream has long since disappeared; but only to reappear in another form.

This argument of Mill's deserves the most careful attention. Theists cannot pass it over with a shrug, nor can it be answered

with a derisive smile, or the recitation of traditional platitudes. Professor Diman's answer is, in essential respects, sufficing. It is certain that nothing can be added to the argument from the side of skepticism. The sufficient reply is the triumph of theism. There is nothing in Spencer half so able, and after these the race of doubters is a race of pigmies.

Diman says: "The most vigorous assault upon the doctrine of a first cause comes, however, in our own time, not from the field of metaphysics, but from the field of physics. . . . The concrete argument for a first cause starts, as we have seen, from our experiences of the changes in the external universe. These are known to us as facts, and for these facts we have to give to ourselves an account. Yet in all this reasoning it is assumed that the universe is an effect, and that it owes its existence to a cause distinct from itself. And, according to the conception which formerly prevailed respecting matter, and the distinction between matter and spirit, it is conceded that the view that the external universe was an effect was not irrational. But it is claimed that the conclusions of modern science have changed all this, and that in the light of these conclusions we are no longer authorized to look upon nature as simply an effect. Besides the changing phenomena, which all agree in tracing to the operation of causes, we are confronted, as we examine it, with permanent and unchangeable elements which, so far as we can see, stand in need of no such explanation.

Diman's reply to the opponents of the doctrine of a first cause.

"These permanent elements in nature, it is argued, are not known to us as beginning to exist; or, in other words, within the range of human knowledge they had no beginning, and consequently no cause, though they are themselves causes of every thing that is taking place. The converging evidence of all branches of physical inquiry seems to be landing us in this result. For, whenever a physical phenomenon is traced to its



cause, that cause is found, in the last analysis, to be a certain quantum of force combined with certain collocations, and the last generalization which science reaches is, that this force is every-where essentially the same, and exists in a fixed quantity, which can neither be lessened nor increased; and that the constant changes which we witness are due, partly to the amount of force and partly to the diversity of the collocations.

“It is only to this permanent element in nature that Mr. Mill is willing to apply the designation of first cause, that is, the primeval and universal element in all causes. ‘For all effects,’ he says, ‘may be traced up to it, while it cannot be traced up, by our experience, to any thing beyond.’ Here we reach the last result of physical inquiry.

“This requires, perhaps, in passing, a little fuller statement. The fundamental maxim on which is founded the modern scientific conception of the universe is derived from the analytic study of the movements of matter. For, as the beginning alike of chemistry and physics, we have two universal propositions, both rendered familiar to us in the popular scientific discussion of the past few years. These two propositions are, that matter is indestructible and that motion is continuous. Upon the validity of these two closely related maxims rests the validity of every conclusion which chemical or physical science has thus far reached. If the scientific inquirer had to deal with quantities which could be either wholly or in part annihilated, or with motions which could wholly or in part cease, science would at once come to an end. The ancients held to the opinion that matter might be created or destroyed; and until modern times it was supposed that moving bodies had a natural tendency to come to a standstill; but by degrees it was seen that when matter apparently disappears, and when motion apparently ceases, there is in reality only a subtle transformation into another form or into an equivalent quality.

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“These two theorems are not fundamental but derivative, and thus we are led directly to a more general proposition that lies back of both. For in asserting that matter is indestructible, and that motion is continuous, we assert by implication that force is persistent; that is, that the force manifested in the known universe is constant, and can neither be increased nor diminished. For it is evident that the indestructible element in matter is its resisting power, or the force which it exerts; and that when motion is arrested we are obliged to conceive of force as impressed in the shape of reaction on the bodies causing the arrest. Strictly speaking, we have no proof of the proposition that force is thus persistent. It is a truth which does not admit of demonstration. At the bottom of all demonstration there must lie an axiom which itself is not demonstrable. We are compelled to believe in the persistence of force simply for the reason that it is impossible to conceive of something becoming nothing, or of nothing becoming something. We pass beyond the realm of experience and appeal to a psychological necessity. Science lands us, at last, in a transcendental region; all her conclusions are seen to rest upon a postulate which we recognize as a law of conscious thought.

“In this persistent force, of which all the phenomena of the universe are but modes of manifestation, we have given us, it is claimed, that permanent element to which, if to any thing, we must assign the character of a first cause. Nor is this reasoning essentially affected if we claim that mind, so far as experience teaches us, is the only thing capable of originating changes, and that therefore this original force from which all change results must be identified with mind. For if the doctrine of the conservation of force be true, the will does not, any more than any other cause, originate force—it simply directs into a particular channel a portion of the force already working in other ways. Volition is an originating cause only so far as it liber-



ates a certain amount of force evolved in the physical processes of the human system. Volition, therefore, does not answer to the idea of first cause, since force must, in every instance, be assumed as prior to it, and there is no reason for supposing force itself to have been created by volition. Thus, so far as the lights of science guide us, and so far as human experience teaches any thing, 'we may conclude that force has all the attributes of a thing eternal and uncreated.'

"If it be urged that mind at least exists, and that mind must have produced mind, we are pointed to numberless analogies of nature in proof of the fact that nobler and more precious products are constantly derived from a viler material, and that the development of the superior from the inferior, the elaboration of the higher from the lower, is the general law.

"Mind does not, therefore, demand mind as its original cause. And, as a result, we are brought to this conclusion: 'that the argument for a first cause may be dismissed, since no cause is needed for that which had no beginning. The phenomena and changes in the universe have, indeed, each of them a beginning and a cause, but this cause is always some prior change; nor do the analogies of experience give us any reason to expect, from the mere occurrence of changes, that if we could trace the series far enough back, we should arrive at a primeval volition. The world does not, by its mere existence, bear witness to a God.' Thus, on reasonings deduced from the conclusions of physical science, the doctrine of a first cause is set aside as a wholly gratuitous hypothesis.

"Undoubtedly the argument which I have just sketched—an argument urged with so much calmness and made to rest on the most indubitable results of modern science—seems the most powerful assault upon the doctrine of a first cause that has yet been made. The mere metaphysical grounds of that doctrine are wholly set aside. The questions so much debated by a

certain school of thinkers, whether from the consideration of a chain of second causes we are compelled, by a necessity of thought, to assume a first cause—whether from the contingent and finite we can leap up by a legitimate process of mind to the infinite and absolute, are no longer of consequence. If it be granted that some kind of being must always have existed, and that the universe in the endless transformation of its own primeval forces contains within itself its own causal principles, the hypothesis of any other source ceases to be a logical necessity. In short, if the universe be not an effect, we are not required to infer a cause. For the affirmation of a first cause being a regressive inference from the existence of a special class of effects, it is evident that the whole argument hinges on the question, Does such a state of things really exist as is only possible through the agency of a supra-mundane cause?

“Once Locke wrote the words, ‘If it be said, There was a time when no being had any knowledge—when that eternal Being was void of all understanding—I reply, That then it was impossible there should ever have been any knowledge; it being as impossible that things wholly void of knowledge, and operating blindly and without per-<sup>Locke’s argu-</sup>ception should produce a knowing being, as it is impossible that a triangle should make itself three angles bigger than two right ones. For it is as repugnant to the idea of senseless matter that it should put itself into sense, perception, and knowledge, as it is repugnant to the idea of a triangle that it should put into itself greater angles than two right ones.’ The argument was conclusive in his day, and with the notion of spirit and matter that then prevailed. But in our day matter is no longer conceived of as senseless.

“Our notions respecting it are radically changed. If we do not go to the extent of Professor Tyndall’s famous declaration, and see in it ‘the promise and potency of all terrestrial life,’  
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we are compelled to view it in a light which goes very far to destroy the sharp antithesis between spirit and matter which prevailed in the time of Locke. It is a sum of forces, and of forces which are indestructible.

"When, however, we consider more closely this most recent objection to the old doctrine of a first cause, a few obvious reflections present themselves. In the first place, what is essential in the idea is in effect conceded. For the theory of an original, indestructible force is, after all, but a method of accounting for change. And in accounting for change it not only concedes that every change in nature had a cause, but that back of all change lies something persistent and unchangeable. This goes far beyond the position of the early positivists, who denied that the conception of an original cause had any legitimate place in scientific investigation, and also recognizes the principle, before insisted on, that the mind cannot rest with an endless succession of second causes. There is, after all, in this theory the positive affirmation of something lying behind the finite and the conditioned.

"We may apply to it what designation we please, but we cannot get rid of the fact that the most refined conception of the universe that science has yet reached is a conception that leads us back to an absolute and eternal source of all the phenomena of existence.

The investigation reveals an eternal source of all being.

"In the second place, the subtle conception of the material universe which we here reach is not a result of experience, or of any scientific experiment, but a purely abstract and metaphysical conception. If the idea of a first cause, in the ordinary sense of the term, is a metaphysical idea, the idea of a primeval force is not less metaphysical. We arrive at it purely as a deduction from the two doctrines of the indestructibility of matter and the continuance of motion; and, too, the truth of neither one of these doctrines has ever been absolutely estab-

lished by experiment. They are seen to be true by a necessity of thought. Hence, in this discussion, the antithesis is not between metaphysics and science, but between two purely metaphysical conceptions. The two hypotheses, that the first cause was self-existing mind and that the first cause was self-existing matter, considered simply as hypotheses, are exactly of equivalent value. To say that one rests upon a solid basis of fact while the other is merely a logical notion of the intellect, is a statement for which there is no ground whatever, since the facts to be accounted for are the same in either case. The only question is, which hypothesis covers those facts most completely. Science, then, does not rid us of the necessity of inferring some kind of a first cause; the only real issue is, whether this first cause must be conceived of as mind or matter; whether we are bound to infer some action of conscious intelligence in the production of the ceaseless changes of the beginning of which we have no knowledge, or whether we may as rationally refer them to the operation of blind force.

“So far as relates to the bare metaphysical conception of a first cause, it makes but little difference whether we assume it to be mind, or whether, assuming it to be matter, we proceed to sublimate our idea of matter, and endue it with such powers and potencies that the dividing line between mind and matter is practically wiped out. For the bare abstract conception, if that is all that we are in search of, will be furnished by one assumption as well as by the other. At best such a conception is only a colorless beginning; it satisfies a necessity of thought, but does not set us forward in the way of any actual knowledge; its only value, so far as natural theology is concerned, consists in its laying the foundation of a structure to be built with other material. We only weary ourselves by seeking thus to climb the ladder of finite agency, and mount back through the long series of dependent sequences

Metaphysical  
conception of  
a first cause.



to one uncaused cause, if we do not proceed to withdraw the result we have reached from the region of metaphysics. ‘The notion of a God,’ says Sir William Hamilton, ‘is not contained in the notion of a mere first cause; for in the admission of a first cause atheist and theist are one. What we are in search of as the foundation of religion is not a blank essence, nor an inconceivable substance. It is only when we have completed and perfected the idea, and when we return to it with the results of further inquiry, that the idea of a first cause becomes clothed with a religious significance.’

“Yet, incomplete and unsatisfactory as is the mere abstract conception of a first cause, it is still an essential part of that complex and comprehensive reasoning on which, as we have seen, the argument for the divine existence rests; and it is a point of no small importance thus to ascertain, at the outset of our inquiry, that recent science, instead of dismissing the hypothesis, has supplied us with a striking evidence of the impossibility of excluding it from rational thought.

“For this reason I find myself wholly unable to agree with those advocates of theism who would wholly dismiss the doctrine of a first cause from the science of natural theology. A recent writer, Professor Knight, himself a strenuous theist, is a representative of this class. He does not hesitate to say that the argument for a first cause belongs to the same class with the long discarded arguments of Anselm and Descartes, and that it is not less illusory. But this ingenious writer seems to forget that the old *a priori* arguments were mere reasonings from conceptions of the mind, while the argument for a first cause as here presented is an argument from an external fact, a fact whose reality is not questioned, and whose existence demands explanation; and when he further claims that it is by an illicit process when, in the argument for

Hamilton's  
idea, that the  
notion of a first  
cause is not  
necessarily of a  
God.

Prof. Knight's  
view.

a first cause, we rise from the finite to the infinite, he imputes to the argument a conclusion which it does not claim, for in the guarded form in which I have presented it, it has not been claimed for the first cause that it is infinite. From the universe as an effect we have simply argued a cause, and all that we have undertaken to show further is that a mere sequence of second causes does not furnish what the reason craves. I concede that in the bare idea of a first cause we do not have the idea of God.

“Much remains to be done before this abstract and empty conception is filled out and completed to a full theistic conclusion. But the notion of a first cause is one essential step toward this result, and I conceive it to be a matter of no little moment if the theories of force, with which modern science has made us so familiar, can be shown, after all, to be simply disguised forms of the old doctrine of a first cause, and to be but lame and impotent substitutes for that earlier conception. It is something to be assured, so far as science has established any theoretical conclusion, these conclusions confirm the doctrine that the universe must have had its origin in something back of itself, and that if science cannot herself give us the idea of a first cause, she has, at least, reached no conclusions inconsistent with it. The notion that the doctrine of a first cause has been wiped out by the modern theory of force, may be dismissed as a mistake.” \*

In addition to the criticisms with which we interlarded the argument of Mill, we further remark that in a series of changes, one causing another, it is an absolute necessity that the change which is transpiring at any given time should be the most recent, and any regress along the line brings us to less and less recent changes. The time measure of the series, as the regress proceeds, is a diminishing

Frequent  
changes soon  
reach their ultimate.

\* Diman's "Theistic Argument," pp. 88-98.



measure, and a line which diminishes in length must be constantly approximating an end, which, however remote, must be ultimately reached—the series must become exhausted. There cannot be a line having one end that does not have two; the present is one end of a series; there must be another end, however far or remote it may be. The words present, past, and future belong to a time order, and have no meaning except as applied to that which exists in an order of succession or temporal series; such a series excludes the eternal. By regress, then, we reach a first change, that is, a beginning—a point where change was initiated. Now, the hypothesis that every change is the product of a preceding change is beset with this difficulty, that when we reach the first or most primitive change it is evident that it could not be caused by a preceding change, though it might be conceived to be the cause of all subsequent changes. If we suppose ourselves to reach, in this primary change, the first cause of all that has come to pass in the series up to date, and all that will come to pass in the forever of the limitless flow, is there nothing remaining to be explained? Have we accounted for the universe? Have we, in fact, in the change which initiates the series, found the real first cause? Mr. Mill himself says, No. He realizes, as you do, that there is something to be accounted for still. Three questions remain to be answered: What was that first change? What produced that first change? What enabled that first change to cause all subsequent changes? We find ourselves thus precisely where we were when we started.

Mr. Mill perceived this, and strove to satisfy himself that matter and force were the permanent something existing before any change, and supplying the conditions of all change, themselves needing no cause, since they were eternal, and first cause. Thus he arrived after all at the idea of first cause; and located the first cause

Mill's argument that matter and force existed before change.

not in change producing other change, but in the permanent or non-changing stable elements of eternal matter and force.

These found—for according to Mr. Mill they were found at the last end of analysis as existing, and not requiring to be ascribed to any cause—he holds that they answer all the demands of a first cause, and are fully adequate to account for all changes in cosmic history, the primal movement of force binding all subsequent changes to it in a chain of absolute necessity; so that here we are again with the old Greeks, not having advanced a peg, building the universe out of matter and motion, which is but another name for force.

When Mill says, “There is in nature a permanent element, and also a changeable; that changes are always the effects of previous changes; that the permanent existences, so far as we know, are not effects at all,” he says what is a semblance to truth, and what, rightly understood, is real truth, but what is misleading and really false as he puts it. It is true that there is a permanent something which is ground of a changeable something, and that is precisely the position always held by theists: it is in essence the doctrine of a primitive and eternal cause of all change or all effects. Mr. Mill seeks to find the cause in nature, and so predicates the unchangeable as permanent elements in nature. These elements he makes to be matter and force; but this is the very point in dispute, the thing to be proved, not to be assumed. There is a semblance of truth in the assumption, however, enough to make it misleading and mischievous. There is seeming stability in matter and force under all changes of form and collocations. They are not as visibly effects themselves as are the mutable collocations which we behold. There is also a semblance of truth in the statement, “that changes are always the effects of previous changes.” One change produces another change. The conclusion, hastily drawn by Mr. Mill, is, that the permanent in nature is not

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caused, and that it is the adequate cause of all changes. This looks like reasoning. Where is the difficulty in the way of its acceptance? that is, why may we not predicate eternal matter and force, and make these account for all phenomena of change—the coming and vanishing forms which are the universe? Why do not these adequately account for all phenomena? Why do they not answer all the demands of a first and continuous cause? Why need we look beyond them?

In answering these questions, we admit the distinction which Mill affirms between the permanent and evanescent in nature—

Mill's distinction between substance and form admitted. between substance and form. There is discernible a substance which is permanent and persistent under all change. We admit, also, that any change which takes place in the phenomena or appearance of that persistent substance is a necessary product of its former condition—that is, that any given state of it not only precedes another state which follows it, but that preceding state necessitates or causes that which follows; not only does change follow change, but the last change is caused by that which immediately preceded it, back to the most remote or first, and regress must bring us to that.

The doctrine that any change is implicit in the change which was immediately antecedent accords with fact; and so that change in itself is cause of change. What is involved in it, or, when translated, what is found to be its meaning? Is it not this, that any change along the line of changes has in it all possible, and of course all actual, changes which are subsequent to it? For if *a* causes *b*, and in such manner that *b* is the only effect which can flow from *a*, and the effect which must necessarily flow from *a*; and *b* causes *c* in the same manner in which *a* causes *b*, is it not perfectly apparent and inevitable that *c* was implicit in *a* as well as *b*? Did not the existence of *a* involve the inevitable existence of *c*, as really as that of *b*?

And if this be so to the third stage, is it not just as true to the three millionth, and to the most remote in the endless series? And if this be so of all possible changes in the future, the same must be true of all actual changes in the past. The most recent change was implicit in the most remote; and so in that most remote change were implicit all changes in the flowing series up to date, and all changes in the flowing series that shall ever occur down to the most distant future.

It may be made plainer by an illustration: Suppose we imagine a row of forms, say bricks, arranged in line four inches apart, each brick standing six inches high—the line extending around the world, or to the greatest imaginable length, say across the diameter of the universe, and so fixed that one brick precipitating itself or being precipitated against its neighbor would start a series of changes by which, in process of time, each brick would precipitate itself against its next neighbor and cause it to fall: we have precisely the Mill's problem illustrated. problem of Mr. Mill. We have the permanent in the line of bricks; we have the changeable in the falling bricks; we have the apparent cause of all the changes in the force which moves the first falling brick emerging in each succession to the end, or until all possible changes have taken place, or until all the bricks have fallen. Have we fully reached the explanation of the phenomena of change that has emerged in the line, in ascribing it to the force which has manifested itself on the impingement of each brick upon its neighbor from the first inception to the last result? It would seem so. Certainly the first falling brick caused the next to fall, and so on to the end. In fact, the first brick which hurled itself against its neighbor was the first visible cause, and though each brick in turn prostrated its neighbor by itself falling, or each change caused the next change to it, that first change in reality caused all the subsequent changes. Mr. Mill asserts that this fully



explains the doctrine of cause ; that is, the substance and motion of the bricks account for all the phenomena. Is he right? We are compelled to answer, No. He has not at all accounted for the phenomena. What he says is true, but it is not *the truth*, because it is not the whole truth. There is and must be something more, not explained by his statement, and which demands explanation, and that something more is the essential thing—that which accounts for all the rest.

The following things remain to be explained : (a) the existence of the bricks ; (b) the existence of the force ; (c) the exertion of the force which starts the movement. It requires all these to account for the phenomena of change. Mr. Mill's account falls short in all these respects. Is it said, No, this is not so? Mr. Mill accounts for the bricks by alleging that they are eternal and need no other account of their existence, and that this is true also of the force. In thus alleging, it is said, he does precisely what theists themselves do, simply admits that there must be something eternal ; and since he finds these, the brick and the force, existing, and impossible to account for, he concludes that these are the eternal, and that they meet all the conditions or requirements of the eternal, in that they are permanent in all change and conditions of change ; thus showing themselves to be necessary to all changing phenomena, and all that is necessary ; and as there is no accounting for their existence except by assuming that they have always existed, there is also no reason to doubt that these are that eternal something *de facto* cause of all other things. To this we answer in two parts : first, the only reason for asserting that there must be something eternal is, that there is existence of some kind now, and since if once there had been nothing there never could have been any thing, there must, therefore, be something eternal. The something eternal must be either whatever is, or something which will account for whatever is ; for if

there be something that is not eternal, that which is eternal must be able to account for the existence of that which is not. But we have seen that change cannot be eternal, since to be change it must have a beginning, or must be something which was not before. This matter and force, which act necessarily and without intelligence, cannot do, and therefore it cannot be the required eternal. That which is changeable cannot be eternal. If it acts necessarily there never could have been a time when it did not act; but timeless causation is impossible, since causation, which is simply the production of something that was not before, requires as its essence a beginning to act; there must, therefore, have been a beginning to every causal action.

But again, it is conceded that physical force is not intelligent; therefore matter and necessarily acting force, which are not intelligent, were they eternal are not adequate to account for a beginning, and much less for a process which from beginning to end is throughout full of the implicates of intelligence. Therefore matter and force do not answer the function of the eternal ground of the universe.

But again, as matter must be viewed in the last analysis, and is so regarded by Mr. Mill, a something which is an atom, that is, an indivisible unit—all matter is of this quality—the aggregate of matter is the sum of such atomic points either collocated in some way or in severance—primitively, they must be viewed as in severance, since collocation is a secondary and not a primary condition—the unit is not a collocated mass.

The unit, it is scientifically demonstrable in every case, is impalpable to any sense—an infinitesimal monad. This is primitive matter in its last predicate. The unit is the monad. Now, these monads are practically innumerable. They are susceptible of unions by interaction, that is, they can be joined together and held in certain relations of impact and mass, by which a



sensible extension and size or form becomes apparent, and in this way it is discovered that extension is an essential part of the atom, as consciousness is of mind. In severance the atom is lonely and meaningless. It is only by impact and union that matter can even be known to exist, or can serve any end of existence; but, as we have seen, all such impact and union by interaction must be in time, for it is an effect, a secondary and not a primary state.

Now, to account for the process of change and the result is the problem. Does the atom do it? To enable the atom to do any thing, there must be power in the atom, and the power must act—as latent power produces no effect. If it act necessarily, that is, cannot exist without acting, we have seen that it cannot be eternal, since an effect of action is always a beginning, and since action without effect accounts for nothing, as we have already seen.

But, again, if one act or change in any atom accounts for the next change, and so on forever, we must account for a series of changes which, by their exact harmony and relation, seem to imply a unitary ground. Now, what is that unitary ground? Matter is not a unit. An atom is a unit, but there is a practically infinite number of atoms or of units. Now these atoms are individual—no one of them is any other. It is as much a separable and distinct existence as it would be if there were not another atom in existence. Where, then, is the unitary ground for the harmonious interacting force which will account for the correlation in the effect, or the harmonious whole. Is it in the force itself? That is, is it the same force which pervades the whole, but which differentiates itself in each atom? That is the doctrine of modern science—the correlation and conservation of force. But then it is not a force of the atoms, but a force which regulates the atoms. But it is the force of some one being, and in that is its

unity. It is also not simply a universally pervasive force, working in all the atoms, but it is a force which works with the exactness of law, and which unites all atoms in a beautiful cosmos. Is not the one force simply the power of an infinitely knowing and powerful person working to a foreseen end? Consider these things: it must be a force of some being who, by self-determination, set it agoing, for we have seen that it was once latent, or began to operate, at a time beyond which it had not acted; we have seen that it is one and the same force of some being, for force cannot be apart from some being; we have seen that it manifests itself in and through all atoms, but cannot be traced to any one atom; we have seen that it manifests itself with the strictness of a law; we have seen that all its manifestations are for one harmonious result; we have seen that the harmonious result is a deft whole of the most marvelous order and adaptation; but it is impossible that these things should be so except as an infinite person should be the fountain of the manifestation. But this is precisely the theory of the universe called theism.

Mr. Mill's theory, it is evident, fails utterly at every point. Its admissions are as significant as its conclusions Mill's theory of change not admissible. are fallacious. Starting with the denial of a first cause, it is compelled before it reaches its second stage to admit that which it denied, that there must in fact be a first cause. It then posits that there is no cause but change; one change causes another change. In this position it confounds cause and effect; and soon becoming aware of the blunder, admits that there must be something behind change which is permanent and cause of change. The permanent Mr. Mill finds to be matter and force. The end to which this last blunder reduces his theory we have just seen.

He perceived, what we must all perceive without effort—what indeed we cannot escape seeing—that there must be something



permanent and eternal, and that the permanent and eternal must be adequate to account for all the transient and changeable. But he was too anxious to free himself from the idea of the supernatural to be able to follow the truth to the end; and so, after much blundering, retractions, corrections, contradictions, and strangely absurd assumptions, he was compelled to build the universe out of matter and unintelligent force, that is, chance or the irregular interactions of an infinite number of atoms. Theism could scarcely desire a greater triumph than in the abortive effort of this great master to free himself from its power.

The theistic argument for a first cause of cosmic order, that is, an intelligent, free, personal cause of the universe, is, beyond dispute, unanswered and unanswerable. For the effect such a cause is an absolute demand, and every attempt to escape it falls into inextricable confusion, contradiction, and absurdity. But it is just to say that there is one assumption of theism that is not so clear, and rests upon no such irrefragable proof; that is, the assumption that matter is not also eternal, and in some sense a co-cause of the universe. Believing that the interests of truth will be subserved by a more careful examination of this point, we ask still further attention to it.

We have reached, as we believe, clearly and unanswerably, the ground that for the cosmos there must be eternal mind; that is, an eternal, personal, free, intelligent being, whose causational agency accounts for its existence; and further, that any force which is manifest in the cosmos is under the guidance, and in fact must be simple attribute, or exercise, of this eternal personality. So much is clear, but it is not so clear that He alone exists from eternity.

It seems to be perfectly clear that there are two kinds of being. This is the spontaneous judgment of mankind. There have been attempts to discredit it from both sides, but without

success. It is one of those brawn, stubborn facts which will not yield. Matter will not vanish into mere idea, and mind will not consent to be measurable in bulk or weight. Both insist on being real, and each demands that it shall be itself and not the other. In this way they must be looked at, and on this hypothesis the universe must be interpreted.

That mind is self-existent necessary being we have found. Can we account for matter? Is it also self-existent and necessary, or is it a product? One of the two, since it is, we know it must be. Can we find out which?

In order to answer this question in any rational way, or even to find out that it will admit of no answer to our finite faculties, we must recur to definitions as the starting point.

If we are to think mind and matter both eternal it must be either simply on the ground that we find them both existing as stable facts manifest in and through all change, or on the ground of necessary existence; that is, (*a*) they could not not be; and (*b*) if they were not both eternal, the cosmos could not possibly have been brought into existence. Neither alone can be adequate ground of the effect.

It is easy to show that matter alone could not account for any thing. This has been done already in the pages immediately preceding, with the force if not the form of demonstration. It is easy to show that mind can account for cosmic order. The thing remaining to be done is, to show that mind can account for matter. This is by no means so easy. And since it is not easy to make out, it is fortunate for us that it is not important to belief in God that it should be made out. The proof of God's existence would not in the least be affected if we were compelled to admit that matter itself is eternal. The eternity of matter admitted or made out does not at all affect theism.

If we assume that matter is eternal, we free ourselves from



the necessity of accounting for its existence. The conception of its creation is a difficult one. We escape the necessity of troubling ourselves with it. It is—that suffices. What is it? Suppose we call it stuff; is there any better name for it? It is stuff, as we can easily see, now worked up by mind into cosmic order. Now, we know that this order is recent, that is, it had a beginning. This we have shown is an absolute necessity. Then we have this as the result: if the Matter not eternally existent. stuff is eternal, as eternal it was not in cosmic order. Taken out of cosmic order, what is it? Simply atoms existing without collocation and powerless. They exist, that is all. This is the furthest point to which it is possible to go—the possible eternal existence of impotent matter.

We should, then, have these two facts: an eternal personal free-being—spirit—mind, and eternal powerless atoms in severance, with which to account for all cosmic phenomena. The outcome is this: all power is personal—the eternal person possesses the idea of the cosmos; the eternal person has power to evolve that idea out of the powerless and meaningless atoms which he finds co-existing with himself. He puts his power into the atoms in form and measure requisite to evolve cosmic order. The material universe is the product; all the power it displays is his power; all the thought it expresses is his thought. The proof of his eternity and infinite power and wisdom are just as clear as if the atoms were created by him, since the atoms exhibit nothing but his power and wisdom. But we find in connection with the cosmic order, in addition to collocations of atoms and the power and wisdom displayed in these collocations, other facts which have to be accounted for. These may shed some light on the question of the origin of Matter the product of intelligence. matter itself, which will show that, inconceivable as it is, it is itself, if not certainly in the highest probability, a product. We find in this cosmic order not simply

matter in which an ordering mind is displayed, but an ordering mind of such inconceivable power that creation itself might not be an incredible thing. As we pursue the study we discover that creation as a fact has taken place beyond the possibility of doubt; for, in addition to collocations of matter and all phenomena of matter and mind working in and through matter, we have minds which we know have been created—minds which are as manifestly differentiable and separable from matter as the eternal mind itself is, and which are no less differentiable from the eternal mind, and which, having begun to be, must have been absolutely created. Now the power which is adequate to raise into existence a mind, and which has power to handle matter as it is handled in building and ordering the sidereal systems out of mere atomic stuff, it is reasonable to believe could originate the stuff itself. There is, indeed, no more real difficulty in conceiving how mind can create matter than there is in conceiving how it can move matter at all. The one case is familiar to us, a matter of constant experience, and on that account we do not think of its mystery. A moment's thought serves to convince us. The other lies beyond our sphere, and for that reason alone it baffles us. It is absolutely certain that eternal personality is necessary to account for the universe. It cannot be made to appear that it is not the only thing that is necessary, or that of itself it is not fully adequate; to assume any other eternal is without shadow of proof, and, whenever attempted, the futility of the idea appears; never more so than in Mr. Mill's attempt to explain the universe without mind.

The extremity to which the theory is reduced appears in nothing more conspicuously than in the last refuge—I do not like to call it subterfuge—to which so great a mind is driven, namely, the assertion that no difficulty is removed or relieved in the idea of a first cause; since if all effects require a cause,



and so a first cause, the question still returns, what caused the first cause? this, too, after admitting that there must necessarily be something uncaused, and after seeking in that uncaused something the ground of all change.

We turn now from the further consideration of the unsatisfactory attempts to explain the universe without God, to see whether we can work out the solution of the great problem more satisfactorily with the postulate of an eternal personal cause.

It will be of good service if, at the very beginning of the ensuing discussion, we spend a little time in defining some terms which will be of frequent occurrence, and which are of conspicuous significance in the reasonings pursued. It will be well also to name some axioms on which much of the reasoning is grounded. We shall thus prevent misunderstanding, and much of that confusion and mere logomachy which so frequently characterizes polemical writings, and which must inevitably appear when terms are employed even with slightly different meanings, or merely tacit variations, and where axioms are either ignored or misconceived. Seeming disagreement, where there is in fact no disagreement, is not unfrequently more harmful or obstructive to the discovery of truth and to final accord than actual and recognized disagreement, the most absolute and radical.

We ask attention to the definition of the following terms: Mind, matter, force, subject, object, time, eternity, absolute, infinite, conditioned, unconditioned, cause, effect, efficient cause, final cause, ontological, cosmological, biological, personal, ultimate, evolution, involution, causation. It is presumed that but few persons will find sufficient interest in a discussion of this kind who do not have a generally correct understanding of these terms, but a generally correct understanding is hardly sufficient. The demand is for exactness.

*We proceed to a definitive statement.*

*Mind*—By mind we understand a *being*, that is, a *substantive existence*, which exhibits mental phenomena, intellection, volition, self-consciousness, etc. Where these phenomena exist, they posit mind. Their absence posits the absence of mind. For fuller explanation I quote the carefully considered and exhaustive definition of Sir Wm. Hamilton :

“Mind is to be understood,” says this erudite author, “as the subject of the various internal phenomena of which we are conscious, or the subject of which conscious-<sup>What is mind?</sup>ness is the general phenomenon. Consciousness is, in fact, to mind what extension is to matter or body. Though both are phenomena, yet both are essential qualities; for we can neither conceive mind without consciousness nor body without extension. Mind can be defined only *a posteriori*—that is, only from its manifestations. Of what it is in itself—that is, apart from its manifestations—we philosophically know nothing, and, accordingly, what we mean by mind is simply that which perceives, thinks, feels, wills, desires, etc. Mind, with us, is thus merely co-extensive with the rational and animal souls of Aristotle; for the faculty of voluntary motion, which is a function of the animal soul in the Peripatetic doctrine, ought not, as is generally done, to be excluded from the phenomena of consciousness and mind. The definition of mind from its qualities is given by Aristotle; it forms the second definition in his ‘Treatise on the Soul,’ and after him, it is one generally adopted by philosophers, and among others by Dr. Reid. . . .

“The next term to be considered is *conscious-subject*. And first, what is it to be conscious? Without antici-<sup>What is consciousness?</sup>pating the discussion relative to consciousness, as the fundamental function of intelligence, I may, at present, simply indicate to you what an act of consciousness denotes. This act is of the most elementary character; it is the condition



of all knowledge; I cannot, therefore, define it to you; but as you are all familiar with the thing, it is easy to enable you to connect the thing with the word. I know—I desire—I feel. What is it that is common to all these? *Knowing* and *desiring* and *feeling* are not the same, and may be distinguished. But they all agree in one fundamental condition. Can I know without *knowing* that I know? Can I desire without *knowing* that I desire? Can I feel without *knowing* that I feel? This is impossible. Now, this knowing that I know, or desire, or feel—this common condition of self-knowledge—is precisely what is denominated consciousness.

“So much at present for the adjective *conscious*; now for the substantive, *subject—conscious-subject*. Though consciousness be the condition of all internal phenomena, still it is only itself a phenomenon, and therefore supposes a subject in which it inheres; that is, supposes something that is conscious, something that manifests itself as conscious. And since consciousness comprises within its sphere the whole phenomena of mind, the expression *conscious-subject* is a brief but comprehensive definition of mind itself.

“*Subject* is the unknown basis of phenomenal or manifested existence. It is thus, in its application, common equally to the external and internal worlds.”\*

On this we remark, that in the external world the subject manifests itself as a something extended—having dimensions and spacial relations. In the internal world the subject manifests itself as self-conscious. The former we call matter—the latter we call mind. We do not know that self-consciousness is a manifestation of a subject which manifests itself as extended. We do not know that a subject which manifests itself as extended ever manifests itself as self-conscious. As the manifestations are totally different and differentiable, we

\* Hamilton's “Lectures on Metaphysics,” Lecture 9.

are forced to the conviction that the subjects are also different. So far as is manifested they have nothing in common. To infer that they are one and the same is wholly unwarranted. In each case we are compelled to affirm a subject, but we are not able from knowledge to affirm that the subjects are identical, or in any single respect resembling, even.

"The co-existence of successive feelings," says Momerie, "is only possible when they are apprehended by a single permanent subject. In other words, relations can only exist in the unity of self-consciousness." \*

Hume asserted, that "what we call a mind is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endued with a perfect simplicity and identity." Of this definition or affirmation Professor Diman says: "A modern school, insisting that psychology must be based simply on physiology, have developed this idea; and by bringing mental laws under the more general physical laws of correlation, conservation, and evolution, have deduced the will from nervous force, and have at last reached the startling conclusion that thought, memory, reason and conscience, all that has shaped itself through successive generations in social forms in art, in philosophy, in religion, many ages ago was latent in a fiery cloud. In this view the human will, no longer free, is reduced to the resultant force of a predetermined organization, transmitted from generation to generation with a cumulative power. The practical conclusion does not differ from that reached by the Scottish philosopher, but the grounds on which the conclusion rests seem to have received from this alliance with scientific results an enormous re-enforcement." †

The definitions of the two distinguished philosophers, Ham-

\* Prof. Momerie's "Belief in God," p. 72.

† Diman's, "The Theistic Argument," p. 12.



ilton and Hume, as we see, are diametrically opposed. It is not difficult to perceive which of the two is correct, nor is it difficult to discover how it happened that two such acute minds came to such opposite conclusions. Hume never lost sight of his indefensible doctrine of cause, and its twin and shadow, his idealism, which transcended that even of Berkeley. They were the evil geniuses which led him into all his mistakes, and deprived him—the acutest of men—of the glory of standing permanently at the head of philosophic thinkers. Dazzled by his strange hallucination, on the originality of which he staked his reputation, he failed to see what no other mind has ever been able to avoid seeing, the absurdity of holding that there could be the phenomena of mind without mind itself—thought without a thinker. Where cause was absolutely non-existent, of course nothing could be required to account for any thing else. Hamilton, on the other hand, lived long enough after the dazzling fetish had lost its power to escape its seductive influence. He saw what every mind in a normal and healthy condition, unbiased by a false theory, sees at once with the clearness of intuition—that the transient always involves the permanent—that under phenomena there must exist subject. This position will never again be assailed. It takes its place as an axiom. The only point where Sir William's position can be called in question is that which a few modern materialistic scientists—not philosophers—are now besieging—namely, the question whether mind must necessarily be the subject beneath mental phenomena, or matter may be the subject. But this assailing position is certainly no more defensible than was Hume's. It escapes one phase of absurdity, but falls into another no less fatal and no less astounding. While accepting the ground that phenomena presupposes subject, it takes the position that a subject which is not mind may account for phenomena of mind.

*Matter*—There is no term in the language better understood,

yet none which modern thought has more mystified. Idealism abolishes it entirely as an hallucination—there is no such thing. Monism confuses it with mind—<sup>Matter a real existence.</sup> makes it the reverse side of the same substance. Materialism abolishes mind and extends matter so as to include mental phenomena. Both science and common sense know matter to be a real existence—the substance of the world—that which is extended in space—that which is cognized by the senses, or which is the ground of sensations—which we see, touch, and handle, which every body knows as body, substance, stuff, out of which all things are formed; yet there is not one of these definitions that has not been mystified into inextricable confusion. It were a vain thing to pursue the phantoms which critical thought, so called, has evoked out of the plainest and simplest terms, and out of the most obvious meanings. The confusion has been created in the interests not of a better understanding but of mystifying doubt or broad atheism.

The position spontaneously and universally taken will never be invalidated, that there is fundamental difference <sup>Mind and matter essentially distinct.</sup> between mind and matter—that they are two distinct and differentiable kinds of existence, each having objective reality, and each excluding the other. Mind is mind and not matter. Matter is matter and not mind. Mind is known as a self-conscious subject. Matter is known as extended unconscious substance. All mind is identical as substance, but differentiable as individualized self-conscious subjects. The individuals are units, but all the units are of the same kind of being. There is a world of mind comprising innumerable minds. All matter is identical, but there are individualized innumerable atoms; every atom distinct from every other atom, but of the same nature and substance with every other. Where mental phenomena are, mind is, as ground of the phenomena. The phenomena cannot exist without the reality of



which it is phenomena. Where physical phenomena are, matter is. The phenomena cannot exist without the subject.

Thus it is certain, not simply as impossible to be reduced to doubt, but certain as absolute knowledge, that there are two kinds of existence—matter and mind—known to man; and that these two are distinct and totally dissimilar. The mind is the knower, and in knowing it knows itself as one kind and as existing. It also knows the other as not itself, and as not resembling itself, and as also having the reality of existence. It knows that every phenomenon and characteristic of itself is peculiar to itself, and that every phenomenon and characteristic of matter is peculiar to itself, and on this ground it differentiates always and forever the existences as two and not one, as separable and *de facto* separate and distinct kinds of being, and not merely separable in thought.

But though mind thus knows of the two kinds of existence, each having nothing in common with the other—separate in fact and not merely separable in thought—it does not know that each is independent of the other, and it does not know that each has independent ground of existence in itself. By knowing that there are these two kinds of existence and no more, it knows that one of the two must have ground of existence in itself, because it knows that in order to existence of any kind there must be some existence that is not dependent. As these two kinds of existence are found, and as it does not intuitively know either that each has the independent ground of existence in itself, or, on the contrary, that one of the two is dependent on the other, it becomes a matter of inquiry whether both are independent, or, if not, which is dependent on the other. Can the problem be solved?

Now, since self-consciousness is simply another name for knowledge of the phenomena of thought, feeling, willing, and such like, and since these phenomena manifest a permanent

subject or basal unity of which they are phenomena, either the subject has always existed or at some time it began to exist ; that is, there has always existed a self-conscious subject—mind ; or at some time the self-conscious subject came into existence *de novo*.

But since the subject which manifests itself as extended is never so manifested except in relations of law and order, which are manifestations of thought, we are compelled to affirm that so far as we have any knowledge of the extended subject it manifests the presence and co-existence of the self-conscious subject, not, indeed, as itself self-conscious, but as exhibiting in its orderly relations the presence of a thinker or framer of laws ; that is, the existence and presence together with it always and every-where of a self-conscious subject. We are not able to think the extended subject, or the subject which is extended, as existing apart from these laws, these phenomena of relation. Thus it appears that the substantive being, or subject, or existence which manifests itself as self-conscious or as mind, is absolutely necessary to the very existence of matter, or that other subject which manifests itself as extended, since we have no power to think it or conceive of it at all, out of manifestations which imply mind, or in manifestations which do not imply mind.

Now does it appear, on the other hand, that the phenomena which manifest a self-conscious subject require, in order to their existence or our conception of them and of the subject of which they are manifestations, the existence of that other substantive being or subject which manifests itself as extended ? Do we find ourselves unable to think mind without thinking matter, as we find ourselves unable to think matter without implicates of mind ? Is there a strict inter-dependence between the two, so that neither can be conceived to exist without the other ? Or is neither dependent on the other ? Either we are thus brought



to strict dualism in the world-ground, or one or the other—the extended subject or the self-conscious subject—may exist independently of the other, and has so existed from eternity, and is itself the uniting ground of all existence. Before we can reach a conclusion on this point it may help us to consider the *tertium quid*, force.

*Force*—What do we mean by force? This term has come to play an important part in modern thought. It is often spoken of as if it were a thing—a third kind of existence or being, a *tertium quid*—mind, matter, force. By means of it, in conjunction of the two other things which are supposed to be eternal, the cosmos is sought to be accounted for. It, that is, this *tertium quid*, is even raised to such importance with some minds as to dispense with mind entirely—matter and force account for all things. So Mr. Mill affirms. It is a favorite idea of a materialistic school, cropping out now as pantheism, either monistic or dualistic, as may strike the fancy, and now as atheism, pure and simple. It becomes indispensable to right thinking, therefore, that we should come to an understanding and agreement as to what meaning we shall attach to the term.

Is force a thing—a distinct kind of existence? If so, in what terms is it described? When we strive to grasp the idea it is found impossible to predicate existence of it except as a property, quality, or mode of some existence, and not a thing in itself. It is found by experience and observation that one atom of matter acts upon another atom of matter, and that mind also has power to affect the relations of atoms among themselves to a certain extent; that the interaction of the atoms among themselves produces and modifies collocations, and collocations tend to other modifications. Now, by force is meant that which, acting in the atoms, produces all modifications or changes of any kind. The question emerges, is

it something which is external to the atom, and which, acting in it as fulcrum, affects other atoms producing changes, or is it of the essence of the atom itself? If it is of the essence of the atom, the atom itself accounts for all modifications, and the force is not a distinct something. If it is something apart and distinct, then the atom plus the external force are required to account for all changes. It is certain that it is something which appears to reside in the atom which affects its neighbor atom.

If we should so conclude we have this puzzle to remove, namely, either the atom is eternal or it is not. If it is not eternal, its existence accounts for nothing, <sup>Is the atom eternal?</sup> but must itself be accounted for. If it is eternal, it is certain that the force which acts in it is not of its essence, but must find its home in some other being external to it, unless it can be shown that it was originally latent, but that would contradict the thesis of its necessary activity, for it is impossible that it should have been active eternally, for that would make effects eternal, which is a contradiction, and therefore an absolute impossibility. Either, therefore, the force is not of the atom, or the atom is not eternal. But if it is not of the atom, it must be of some other existence external to the atom; and if of some other being, then that other being must be eternal to account for its existence. If this be supposed, the same difficulty apparently emerges as in the former case; that is, in this case as in the former the force must have existed as a latent property, and not one necessarily acting. Then that other being must be supposed to be free, and must be free and self-determining, for otherwise the latent force could never become active. Then the force which enables or causes one atom to act upon another must be a self-subsisting and independent and self-determining force, or the manifestation of a being of whom these predicates are true. But then mind, which is



the only other kind of being, is thus demonstrated to be the real fountain of all the force which appears in the universe. The force in the atom is, then, simply exterior and eternal mind working changes among the atoms; and this is what also appears when we consider the changes themselves, which invariably express purpose and thought, and show that they are controlled by and emanate from a being who acts from ideas or from apprehended ends. The order is this: Thought or idea as a something apprehended though not yet in existence; purpose, or a determination to give existence to the idea; executive volition, or exerted power in or on the atom which produces changes. The fact thus comes to light that the force is not of the atom as an eternal, self-existing thing, but is of a mind which posited it in the atom as a law of its being, when the atom itself was produced; or it is a force which mind directly exerts in the atom, and is strictly external to it.

Now it remains to inquire, Is the atom itself independent and eternal, as we have found that mind must be? Perhaps it will be forever impossible for the human mind, by any knowledge which it can acquire (unless by communication from the Eternal Mind himself), to answer that question. There seems at present no way to come at that knowledge, if it is possible even to find a ground for rational belief, which is doubtful. It is even doubtful whether revelation affirms any thing on the point, and, therefore, whether evidence can be gathered from any source to settle our minds into a calm and tranquil state of belief with respect to it. Without attempting to argue the point whether either nature or revelation give any light on the subject, let us admit, in the absence of explicit and certain knowledge to the contrary, that the atoms are eternal, self-existing, and independent existences. What then? How does the admission affect theism? That is the only issue

involved. The interests of truth can suffer in no other aspect if not in this.

By the term *absolute* is meant that which exists unconditioned by relations of any kind. To the eternal there could be no relations, unless there were many eternals. For relations require plurality of beings. Plurality destroys absoluteness.

Definition of  
the terms ab-  
solute, condi-  
tioned, cause,  
etc.

By the *infinite* we do not mean one who fills boundless space, or spacial extension at all; we do not mean one than whom there is no other; but one who as to being is timeless, and as to perfection is limitless; not the only existing but the all-embracing, without whom nothing else is, or ever could have been. The sole and only fountain of existence, but not the whole of existence.

By *unconditioned* we mean one whose existence does not require and is not affected by any other existence, though all other existence is conditioned by him—so conditioned that it is absolutely dependent on him.

By *cause* we mean a being by the exertion of whose power things and events are originated. By first cause we mean a being who existed alone, and out of whose efficient agency the universe arose into existence, and upon whom all sub or second causes and agencies depend for their power of existence and agency, so that except himself there are no causes not derived from him. By efficient cause we mean the power which gives being or determines events. By second cause we mean an effect which determines some other effect, but which was itself also determined. All second causes trace their existence back to a prime cause, which is the only underived cause. Man is a real cause of his own free acts, but dependent. He is not a cause in himself, but by the empowerment of another; but he is not simply a second cause whose action is necessitated by another, or by something which preceded. For his exist-



ence he is dependent; but in the exercise of the powers bestowed upon him he is free, so that his acts are his own—are self-determined.

By *final cause* we mean some subjective condition, which moved the eternally free God to exert his efficient agency. The efficient cause of the universe is his exerted power; the final cause of the universe was that idea for the realization of which he was moved, not necessitatedly but freely, to create the universe. The final cause is always antecedent to the exercise of causational agency. The final cause may exist from eternity: the efficient cause must necessarily be in time. The final cause is an idea: the efficient cause is exerted energy. The energy is eternal. Its exercise demands a point of beginning. For the universe there must be both a final and an efficient cause.

By *subject* is meant mind itself, or the essence and attribute of the being who manifests intelligence.

By *object* is meant any thing not of the mind which is brought into relations to its thought or feeling or action of any kind. The mind itself thus becomes objective when studied or thought of by itself; but to avoid confusion it is called, in every such case, subject-object.

The terms subjective, objective, etc., defined.

By *eternity* is meant that of which neither beginning or end can be predicated. It excludes the idea of succession. In it properly there is no past, no future. That of which eternity can be predicated is simple endless existence, to which nothing can be added. Time has in it the idea of existence, but of existence which began, and which is always measurable in terms of succession. It is made up of atoms or moments which do not co-exist but which follow each other. It is divisible into past and present, and future *in posse*. There is no time or thing of which time can be predicated of which these predicates are not true. There is no timeless or eternal time. We should have the

exact measure of *de facto*-time, for there is an exact *de facto*-time, if by any possibility we could reach the first point of beginning, and there was such a point, and then could fill up the moments from that to the present. Potential time is limitless in the future, but real time will always be measurable; the starting-point being the then present moment, which is the last end, the first end will forever be reachable by regress along the line of beginnings until we come to the most primitive moment, or point whence the series started. In traversing the time measure, however long, there is no change of relation to that which is eternal. At no point of regress is there any less past to him, at no point is there any more or less future. The only measure of his existence is a beginningless and endless now, which has neither past nor future. For a fuller discussion see prescience.

By *causation* we mean that which is effected by causal action. The cause means the being who causes. Causation is the causing—the power in exercise.

By *personal* we mean an intelligent, self-conscious, and self-determining being—not a thing. All existence must rank either as personal or non-personal.

*Ontological* means the science of being merely as being—existence. Cosmos refers to the order of the universe—the adjusted and harmonious system. The ontological argument is based simply on the fact of existence. The cosmological on the orderly arrangement pervading existence. The teleological argument rests on existence and order, and posits as their ground final cause, as an agent acting with purpose and design.

*Ultimate* is invariably used as most primitive, the last in the regress, or first in the beginning series.

*Evolution* means the drawing forth or unfolding of the potencies of a thing—development, or bringing out what is con-



tained. That which is evolved must have been involved, or involution must precede evolution. Nothing can be evolved which was not involved.

To these definitions we add some maxims or necessary truths:

Truth is one and indivisible.

Truth is immutable—cannot but be truth.

Truth is self-consistent.

Propositions which contradict each other cannot both be true, though one or the other may be true.

No proposition which has in it the element of contradiction can be true.

No proposition becomes true because one or many or all men believe it to be true. This is not the equivalent of saying that universal consent has in it no force of argument. "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*," it is believed, has in it great force of argument, but it does not constitute a thing true; it shows that it probably, possibly, but not certainly, is true.

No proposition that is true can lose its quality of truth, though one or many or all men disbelieve or dispute or deny it.

The truth or non-truth of any proposition is wholly independent of the opinions of men.

Truth is truth, and no power in the universe can convert it into non-truth.

Some truths can be known by man to be truths.

Some truths cannot be known by man to be truths.

Some non-truths can be known by man to be non-truths.

Some non-truths cannot be known by man to be non-truths.

Some things ought to be believed, the truth of which cannot be known.

Some things ought not to be believed the non-truth of which cannot be known.

There is fundamental difference between an idea and a thing.

An idea may be true or false.

A thing must have in it the reality of existence, though it might be possible that no idea of it exists in any human mind.

There is fundamental difference between an eternal Being and any created existence. The one has beginning, the other has no beginning. The one is necessary, the other is contingent. The one has all possibilities in himself, the other has no possibilities not derived in itself. The one is independent and wholly underived, the other is dependent and wholly derived.

There can be no existence without some eternal existence.

Any eternal existence must be necessary and unconditioned.

No non-eternal existence can be necessary or unconditioned; or in other words, every non-eternal existence must be contingent and conditioned, or dependent on the action of the eternal.

Every contingent existence necessitates the prior existence of a being who is its cause.

Any being, to become a cause, must act.

All causational activity must have a beginning, though the ultimate actor himself can have no beginning.

In any series of beginnings there must be a most primitive or first beginning.

The causal act which originated the most primitive effect is the first causal act, and he who exerted it is first cause.

In a chain of causes in which each successive cause is necessitated by that which preceded it, the successive causes, usually denoted second causes, are not in any proper sense real causes, but are merely effects in a caused series.

Whatever is given in the effect was potentially implicit in the cause from eternity. In other words, every evolution implies antecedent involution, for only that can be evolved which was potentially involved.



Intelligence, manifested in an effect, whether in the method of its production or in itself as a quality, denotes not simply potential intelligence in the cause, but actual intelligence in actual exercise.

First cause must be personal cause, or must be free and self-determined; that is, capable of passing from potential, non-necessitated, free cause, into active and actual cause, by an act of self-determination. The act of self-determination to an end is the most primitive act of the first cause; thus the most primitive existence is demonstrated to be necessarily a personal Being.

The eternal Being, who from potential cause became *de facto* cause, was, as to being, in no respect different after he became *de facto* cause from what he was prior to causational activity; or, in other words, the employment of his power neither added to nor detracted from his eternal perfections; nor has there ever been, nor can there ever be, any change or modification in respect of these. The essential nature of a necessary being is, and must forever be, unchangeable.

That which is created or brought into existence by a self-determined cause necessarily exists as a thought, or in idea, before the power is exercised which makes it exist as concrete reality.

The final cause of reality must have been something which, existing in idea, moved the eternal by a free determination to convert the idea into reality—or a subjective idea was final cause of the exercise of causational efficiency. The idea did not necessitate the causational activity, but was the indispensable ground of it; for in no other way could unnecessitated activity begin, but by a something apprehended in thought and freely chosen by the mind.

Thus it is demonstrable that the efficient cause of all is a mind, and that the final cause of the exercise of efficient agency

is an eternal idea subjective and inherent in the free cause himself, as of his very essence. For to suppose the idea created is to suppose eternal mind to exist without ideas; but that would be the equivalent of its self-creation, which is a contradiction.

As mental phenomena indicate mind as their subjective ground, so moral phenomena indicate as their ground a moral subject. Ethical ideas and feelings in man, as sense of right and wrong, and feeling of obligation to do the right and to refuse the wrong—the sense of oughtness and ought-notness, proclaim a moral cause, or that man's maker himself possesses a like moral nature. The eternal being is a moral being.

Just as the thoughts and actions of men are either right or wrong, are either virtuous or vicious, so the universal history of man proves that there is an inner sense or endowment of man's nature which not only judges and discriminates between actions, but which urges that the thing pronounced to be right and virtuous ought to be followed, that the things pronounced to be wrong ought to be avoided; there is an accusing and excusing conscience; there is a sense of duty which frequently opposes itself to desire, inclination, and passion. The words ought and duty are essential in treating of man, and cannot be replaced by any other words whatever.

The truth of certain propositions having been established or conceded, there are logical processes whereby definite conclusions founded on these propositions can be absolutely proved to be true.

- There are propositions generally assumed to be true which cannot be logically proved to be true, yet the truth of which cannot be rationally denied.

If any proposition every-where and by all men always has been and always would be held to be true, that proposition is certainly true.

Since causation is the production of something new, and



since the producing energy must be the energy of some being, and since the exercise of the energy must be in time, and since the being and the energy must have existed in order to the use or exercise, and since its exercise having a beginning must be self-determined, and since self-determined exercise of productive energy can only be by a free choice to so exert it, and since such a choice must be from an apprehension of the thing in thought before it exists in fact, and since the determination to produce it must be some reason which induces the causal agent to choose it, we find that the final cause of the universe is the desire of the Creator to realize an idea, or is the idea itself. We have then, first, a being; second, an idea or concept; third, a desire or disposition; fourth, choice or determination; fifth, a volition or forth-putting of power; sixth, the thing produced or introduction of something new, that is, we have efficient cause or causation at the last end producing effect; with eternal person and idea at the first end as necessary antecedent.

With these definitions and maxims in mind we proceed to develop the theistic theory.

“The outcome of this inquiry might conceivably be threefold. The theistic idea might be found to be (1) contradictory or absurd; (2) an implication of the religious sentiment only, and without any significance for pure intellect; and (3) a demand of our entire nature, intellectual, moral, æsthetic, and religious. In the first case it would have to be abandoned. In the second it would be a fact of which no further account could be given, but which need not, on that account, be rejected. In the last case theism would appear as the implication of all our faculties, and would have the warrant of the entire soul. How this may be the course of our study must show.

“The function of the theistic idea in human thought as a whole is very complex. First, theism may be advanced as an

hypothesis for the explanation of phenomena. As such it has no religious function at all, but solely a logical and metaphysical one. The question is considered under the law of the sufficient reason; and the aim is to find an adequate explanation of phenomena, especially those of the external world. Most theistic argument has been carried on on this basis. The facts of the outer world have been appealed to, especially those which show adaptation and adjustment to ends; and the claim has been set up that only intelligence could account for them. These facts have been supplemented with various metaphysical considerations concerning the absolute and the relative, the infinite and the finite, the necessary and the contingent, the self-moving and the moved; and the work was done. How far this comes from satisfying the religious nature is evident.

“Second, theism may be held as the implication and satisfaction of our entire nature, intellectual, emotional, æsthetic, ethical, and religious. These elements reach out after God so naturally, and, when developed, almost so necessarily, that they have always constituted the chief actual grounds of theistic belief. Accordingly the human mind has always adjusted its conception of God with reference less to external nature than to its own internal needs and aspirations. It has gathered its ideals of truth and beauty and goodness, and united them into the thought of the one perfect Being, the ideal of ideals, God over all and blessed forever. A purely ætiological contemplation of the world and life, with the sole aim of finding an adequate cause according to the law of the sufficient reason, would give us an altogether different idea of God from that which we possess.” \*

What are the implicates of theism? that is, of the postulate, or rather thesis, that there has existed eternally an infinitely perfect Being who is the cause of all other being, and sole

\* Bowne's "Philosophy of Theism," pp. 7-9.



and sovereign governor of the universe—the *causa causarum*, the unitary ground of all existence—without whom nothing would or could have been?

If we add to natural theism Christian theism, we must add to the postulate or thesis: "A Being who is holy, just, and good, the father and friend of man, the righteous ruler of the universe."

Now, what are the *implications* of this thesis? Whatever they are, Christianity is responsible for them, and stands or falls with them.

*Implication 1.* The first implication is, that he who is sole cause is himself uncaused.

It follows that his existence is not a necessitated existence, and also that it is a necessary existence.

Not necessitated, as that would implicate a somewhat antecedent to him to condition his existence, which contradicts the thesis that he is the eternal and sole cause.

Necessary, since if *de facto* eternal, which the thesis affirms, there never was a time when he might not have been, or when his existence was matter of option.

*Implication 2.* The second implication is, that he who is not voluntary as to his existence is also not voluntary as to his perfections, since his perfections, which constitute his being, are as necessary and eternal as his being itself.

*Implication 3.* The third implication is, that as that which is caused to exist did not exist until caused, there was a time when nothing existed whose existence is caused.

*Implication 4.* The fourth implication is, that he who is cause of all, as the necessary condition of causation, himself existed prior to causation, and when as yet he was not a *de facto* cause, but potential cause, or cause *in posse* merely.

*Implication 5.* The fifth implication is, that the uncaused cause, as cause of all, possessed in himself the sole and suffi-

cient ground of all things of which he is or ever will be cause, as an eternal inherence prior to all causation.

*Implication 6.* The sixth implication is, that he who possesses eternal being, and in whose being is included all perfection without option or choice of his, but who also was at one time not a *de facto* but only a potential cause, must possess among his perfections the power of self-determination or freedom of action, otherwise he never could have become a *de facto* cause. The implication therefore is, that he is a personal being—that is, free; since there could be nothing external to himself to necessitate him or to originate action in him, and nothing internal to himself to necessitate him at one time more than another, and since eternal causation is a contradiction, and therefore impossible.

*Implication 7.* The seventh implication is, that the universe is not a necessary existence, since at one time it was not, and since it is the product of a free, and therefore unnecessitated, cause. But it is a necessitated existence, since it exists by a coercive causal power.

*Implication 8.* The eighth implication is, that since the causal act was free and self-determined, the causal actor is responsible for all its evolvments, so far forth as it is result of the causation which he exerted.\*

*Implication 9.* The ninth implication is, that the causal agent and thing caused are absolutely distinct and different, though each involves the other (that is, the cause as *de facto* cause—that is, as acting—involves the effect, and the effect as existing involves the cause), the one being eternal and necessary, the other being temporal and contingent.

*Implication 10.* The tenth implication is, that as the causal agent was himself uncaused, possessing necessarily in himself from eternity the requisite power for whatever is or ever can

\* See Appendix, Note A.



be evolved by him in time by causational activity, he must himself be forever immutable in his essence of being and perfections, however he may vary his activity and relations; that is, himself being sole cause and eternal, there is nothing to detract from or add to his being, and it must, therefore, forever remain the same. If it should be said he may add to or take from his own being, and so may become what he was not, either less or more, the answer is, that were such a change possible it would be possible for him not to be eternal, which is a contradiction, as being eternal he cannot not be, or be different from what he is.

*Implication 11.* The eleventh implication is, that while there is no possible mutation, or coming or going, or increase or decrease, in his own nature and perfections, there are forth-puttings of his perfections, or expressions of himself, in an order of succession and change. Thus while in himself he is the eternal absolute, in causational activity he puts himself under conditions of relation and time as a free, self-determining person. While in himself there is no succession of any kind, but simply the immutable and unconditioned *I Am*, in translating himself into causation he creates succession and time, to which he becomes related, thus passing under a conditioned form or mode of existence.

*Implication 12.* The twelfth implication is, that as all his perfections, which are simple inclusions of his essential being, are eternal, his knowledge is eternal, admitting neither of increase nor decrease; and as his knowledge is forever a part of his being, all its inclusions are forever consciously in and present with him—a perfect sphere which he forever fills. See discussion of omniscience for fuller exposition and vindication of this point.

*Implication 13.* The thirteenth implication is, that causational agency must in exercise necessarily be temporal, and

cannot by possibility be eternal ; and also, and by necessity, it must be free and self-determined, since it is impossible for a being that is not free to pass from a state of inaction by spontaneity, there being nothing but a free power that could account for an unnecessitated movement.

*Implication 14.* The fourteenth implication is, that since the causational activity could not itself be caused by some other causational agency, either external or internal, but was a self-determined forth-putting, and since there must be some reason for it, no other reason can be assigned than some end or purpose to be accomplished which was pleasing to the actor and to which he was free. It follows that the final cause of causation was an end conceived by and pleasing to the actor. So causation implies a final cause or reason, and is impossible without it.

*Implication 15.* The fifteenth implication is, that the thing caused was apprehended by the causational agent as the thing to be caused and the thing pleasing to him, and therefore the universe existed first in idea, and the desire to actualize it was the final cause of the divine causational activity.

*Implication 16.* The sixteenth implication is, that as being infinitely holy, just, good, powerful, and wise, there can be nothing inconsistent with these immutable perfections in the desire or motive which prompted the creative act, and nothing inconsistent with these perfections in the actualization of his desire by his causational act ; that, therefore, the perfectly foreseen outcome of the causational act will be in perfect accord with these perfections, whatever that outcome may be.

*Implication 17.* The seventeenth implication is, that the world-ground is a personal Being, since a being who exists and acts freely, and from no other cause than a desire to realize an idea, fills all the requirements of personality. The sum of the implicates is as postulated: An eternally existing, infi-



nitely perfect Being, who is the cause of all being, and sole and sovereign governor of the universe—the *causa causarum*, the meeting-ground of all existence, without whom nothing would or could have been.

#### FINAL PROOFS OF DIVINE EXISTENCE.

It has been insisted by some able thinkers on both sides of the controversy that the proposition is incapable of proof; that it must stand simply as an intuitive or as an assumptive affirmation, or be discarded as unproved and impossible to be proved; or, in any event, that the utmost power of the argument can only produce a feeling of probability in the mind, and that, therefore, the attempt at proof is unwise and hurtful; that the discussion of the subject, because either of the weakness of the argument or the obscurity which gathers about it when it is polemically treated, is disturbing rather than helpful to faith. That this is so is not in proof. It is in proof that no evidence within the reach of man can fully set forth to him, so as to bring within his perfect comprehension, either the mode of divine existence, or the measure of the divine perfections, or the methods or *modus operandi* of the divine activity. These transcend our power of thought, and so cannot be evinced in completeness to our faculties; but it does not therefore follow that "He whose understanding is infinite," and whose ways are past finding out, may not furnish us abundant proofs of his existence. We think, that so far is it from being true that the subject is incapable of adequate proof, that the very opposite is true. The proof is superabundant and perfect, so that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, even his eternal power and godhead." The attempt to throw discredit on the proof has been a signal failure. But this is a point which each mind must determine for itself. What is demonstration to one may be no proof to another. This is an

evil of our limitations as to faculty and of our degenerate moral condition, which we have to recognize in all our search after truth. The utmost that can be done is to present the evidence of truth as clearly as possible, and commit it to such fate as may attend it at the bar of the imperfect individual reason. If it in any case be so obscure that it can find no standing either in the intuitive or discursive reason, we know of no other means by which it can be entitled to acceptance by rational beings. The argument to follow will show whether our confidence is well founded.

It is quite the rule with thinkers to begin the argument by first introducing the *a priori*, or ontological proof. This, doubtless, is the logical order. Some of the ablest minds have regarded the *a priori* argument as demonstration, and, therefore, as closing the whole question. To us it has seemed too obscure to be of much help to ordinary minds. I am free to confess that it does not find me, and that I personally have never been able to find it.\* The *a posteriori* argument is that upon which greatest reliance has been placed by the greater number of scientific theologians, and <sup>The *a posteriori* argu-</sup>ment. we cannot doubt with good reason. In general it is the argument from effect to cause—the argument which deduces a cause from a known effect, and which deduces the nature of the cause from the character of the effect. The requirements of the argument are, that an effect be clearly shown, and that the deduced character of the cause be such as the effect demands. When these two points are made beyond the possibility of doubt the argument is complete, and necessitates the assent of rational intelligence. In order to feel the full force of the argument it is not necessary that we should be able to comprehend either the effect or cause perfectly. The effect may be known to be an

\* See Appendix, Note B.



effect without being known in all its contents, and the cause may be known to be cause without the possibility of being known to the full extent of its contents. What is important is, that the effect should be known as effect, and that the cause should be known as cause. In this case our search is not simply after a cause of some particular effect, but after *the cause*—the *causa causarum*. There is a difference to be noted between second causes or con causes and ultimate cause, and also between created causes and uncreated cause. Our search goes even further than the discovery of the cause, and seeks to know so much of his nature and character as may be evinced to our faculties in what we know of the effect which declares him. The *a posteriori* argument has been treated in five aspects or forms. The division seems necessary that it may be presented in all its force, and is sufficiently exhaustive :

1. The cosmological argument.
2. The teleological argument.
3. The moral argument.
4. Argument from universal belief.
5. Argument from influence of theories.

Taking the arguments up in the order named, our attention will first be given to *the cosmological argument*—  
A word about the etymology of the term cosmological. or cosmical. Cosmological: Greek, *κόσμος*, the world or universe in order, harmony; *λόγος*, a discourse: an argument deduced from the order and harmony of the universe.

In the holy Scriptures a logical argument is never attempted. The elements of the cosmical argument are abundantly given therein, and the conclusion enunciated with great frequency; so that the doctrine of the argument is the doctrine of revelation. The revelation proclaims creatorship—the cosmical argument deduces creatorship. In the conclusion the two come to unity. That wonderful psalm in the opening

verse of revelation is the sublime amen anthem of all philosophic research: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The refrain of the psalmist of Israel three thousand years later is the choral hymn of all generations: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night, unto night showeth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

The argument requires, first, that we should make sure of a cosmos. Strange enough, it has been disputed; therefore the greater need that it should be verified. The doctrine of idealism taught by Bishop Berkeley in the "Minute Philosopher" did not deny the existence of the universe, but denied the possibility of knowing it, by asserting that the mind has no means of verifying the existence of any thing but itself. The argument by which he attempted to establish this marvelous theory of nescience was exceedingly ingenious, and not a little perplexed his philosophical critics. Mr. Hume adopted the theory, and grafting upon it his own theory of causation, or it upon his own theory of causation, or rather the negative of causation, carried it to the extreme of denying the possibility of verifying the existence of mind itself, averring that all of which we have any evidence is the endless succession of thoughts, the thinker being wholly unknown. Some of the modern agnostics have revived this notion. The recondite reasoning, however unanswerable, neither convinced the philosophers themselves nor won any permanent following. It amused and dazzled and expired. Men of all grades of intelligence continued to assert that they knew themselves to exist, and knew also the universe, which they perceived to be real and objective—other and differentiable from the self. It mattered nothing that they

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were unable to explain the modes, the logical puzzle could not deprive them of the certainty that that which they saw and felt and handled was real. The self whose anxieties and hopes and fears and necessities pressed them so agonizingly would not surrender its consciousness and vanish into non-substantial shade at the wave of the wizard's wand; the solid worlds refused to desert their orbits, and rolled on in their great circles as though the logical sorcerer had not put them under his spell. It is true that the mind does not know how it is that it transcends itself, but it is also true that it does know the existence of that which is not itself.

The cosmos is. It is as we behold it, only vaster and immeasurably more wonderful. Science, with tireless research,  
The cosmos — is constantly enlarging it. The telescope carries its extent and grandeur. our vision over regions of immensity unknown to our ancestors, and spreads out before our gaze sidereal magnificence million-fold grander than their eyes ever beheld; microscopy unfolds mysteries of life, of variety and extent, which escaped their observation; geology plunges us into depths of time, and unrolls to our view marvels of change and revolution of which they were ignorant. We seem to be but standing at the threshold of a magnificence which sweeps outward to infinity, and backward to eternity—the visible temple of the uncreated—the cosmos. Such is the universe. Thus much we know. It is not matter of conjecture, imagination, possibility. It is real. We see it. We feel it. It projects itself upon us through the avenues of all the senses. To doubt is impossible. It is not simply a mass of unrelated substance—a pile—a chaos—or even an interacting whole, without form or order. It is a cosmos—a harmonious orderly system pervaded and regulated by law. Every atom of it is deftly fitted into unity. It attains to the idea and reality of a kind of unity in which no part is out of

relation to or independent of all the other parts. This is an established and a now universally accepted postulate of science.

It is: consequently it always was, or at some time it began to be; it is eternal or it had a beginning. It must be obvious that one of these alternatives is necessarily true. A third is impossible. The mind is unable by any effort to conceive a third. If we adopt the first supposition, we thereby do away with the idea of creation; and if we make the supposition good, we disprove the existence of a creator and establish either the theory of atheism or pantheism. This is freely confessed. All that the atheist, or disbeliever in God, has to do to vacate all need and all possible proof of God, is to make it appear that the universe is eternal; and unless he can do this he can never make any headway among reasoning beings against the idea. On the other hand, what the theist must do to make good his ground is, to show that the cosmos is not eternal. If he fail here his argument fails. The whole controversy, therefore, hinges on this point. Any thing to be accepted must satisfactorily account for the facts, or at least must not be in irreconcilable hostility to them. In the outcome, it is the law of rational thought that any theory should be discarded which does violence to reason; and among plausible hypotheses that one should be accepted which furnishes the most natural and complete solution of the problem.

Is the universe eternal? Since we find it existing, the *onus* seems to fall upon the negative. This apparently illogical order results from the fact that the support of this negative is a part of the argument which affirms divine existence. By the universe may be meant, and the term is so employed in this controversy, to mean, either:

First: The cosmos—the system of order, now existing—the present organic condition of things; or,



Second : The inorganic substance of the universe, inclusive of forces potential to the present order.

Taken in the first sense the question is : Is the present system of the universe eternal ? By the present system we mean the existing order and arrangement of all things—worlds as to their relative position, form, size, motions, and statical and dynamical laws, inter-orbital arrangements, orders of life, and whatever else pertains to the organic whole of the universe. To this question we must answer, No. And by this we do not mean simply that the idea is not probably true—that we sustain an opposite opinion—as is in many cases the force of the negative. We mean greatly more than this, and will be able to show, not alone that the supposition is not true, but that it is *impossible* it should be true ; thus discrediting it, not merely on account of the insufficiency of proof

The universe  
not eternal.

which, if shown, would be ample ground, nor yet discrediting on account of sufficient proof to the contrary ; but, because the thing supposed is an absolute impossibility. This will appear in several ways. It is, however, just to the argument to make mention of the fact that the hypothesis of the eternity of the universe is utterly without the semblance of proof—a bold and unsupported assumption ; the whole of the attempt at proof is comprised in the formula, “it is, therefore it always was”—which is the equivalent of the statement that whatever is must be eternal ; not only a “*non sequitur*,” but a bold contradiction of certain knowledge. It is not simply an assumption, but it is an assumption contradicted by actual and accredited facts within the reach of every man’s observation. We are daily witnesses of the fact, that all the forms of life about us are transient, appearing for an hour, or a day, or a year, or a century, or carrying up to a few hundreds of years, then vanishing away forever. The individuals all have a beginning and an end—none of them are eternal. This we know by proof co-ex-

tensive with human experience. If it is said this observation applies only to individuals, while it is the races that are eternal, geology responds, as it is with the individuals so it is with the races also. Taking us by the hand it conducts us down through hidden strata of almost infinite extent, until it lays bare to our gaze the primitive foundations of the world itself—its virgin surface of glowing crystals—disclosing to us along the galleries of the ages, as we descend into the immeasurable abyss, the commencement and end of numerous orders of life long since perished, and the comparatively recent advent of all the forms with which we are conversant; thus demonstrating the utter falsity of the theory that races are eternal. If it should be said, but it is not specific organic forms that are eternal, but life itself, whose forms are ever changing while it itself is perpetual, our guide points to the life-line, beneath and behind which azoic fires light us to the dawn of time itself. Thus the fact-proofs all bear with irresistible force against the theory of the eternity of the existing order.

But if no such fact-proofs are accessible to us, we now proceed to show that the supposition is in itself contradictory and impossible. The theory is, that the present order is eternal, that is, without beginning. Now one part of the present order is, that our earth is so related to the sun, that in a definite number of days it revolves around the sun. The period of the revolution is called a year. By another motion of itself around its own axis, it presents and retires its surfaces to and from the sun in periods of twenty-four hours—producing at each point on its surface alternate light and darkness, called day and night. It also happens that there is another motion by which its distance from the sun changes, and by which any given surface is presented more vertically or more obliquely to the sun, from which it occurs that there are four distinct seasons in the annual rotation—called spring, summer, autumn,



winter; periods of germination of seeds, growth, ripeness, death. These are all well-known facts. Now, it is impossible that that order should be eternal. In that order each year has a beginning, each season has a beginning, each day and each night has a beginning. There is nothing *in the order* that has not a beginning. It is impossible to obtain, by the summation of parts each and every one of which had a beginning, that which had no beginning. No axiom is plainer than this. Should any one imagine a possible relief in the confused idea of an infinite series, a little reflection will show that nothing new is introduced by the phrase. An infinite series of what? of beginnings? There is nothing in the series that did not begin.

But what is meant by infinite? Does the term apply to number? Then there is no infinite number. All numbers can be numbered and endlessly increased. But if there were a possible infinite number, it would be impossible in this case. To make infinite time would require that the earth should have revolved around the sun an infinite number of times. But there are four seasons in the year, and the number of seasons must be four times as great as the number of orbital revolutions, and the number of days marking the number of revolutions around its axis must be three hundred and sixty-five times as great, that being the number in each year. The absurdity is manifest and manifold, and consists in the subsumed implication that immeasurable, infinite duration can be composed of a succession of measurable parts, eternity divisible into days, years, centuries. If the number of years is less than the number of days, it cannot be infinite, since another number greatly exceeds it; but if less than infinite, it falls within the categories of beginnings, and there was a first. Or take another illustration: Races are composed of progenitors and progeny, but both progenitors and progeny

Non-eternity  
of the universe  
illustrated.

are of the same kind and duration—the progeny in turn becoming progenitors—each and all having had a beginning. Now in this case, precisely as in the other, it is impossible from the finite or beginning parts to make an infinite or unbeginning whole ; and there is this further difficulty in this case, that all progeny requires pre-existent progenitors ; the term progeny therefore must fall within the limits of time, since it takes its origin from a pre-existent order—progenitors. But if the progeny falls within time, when we reach the point at which it takes its origin, that is, the first generation of progeny, we come to the original progenitors. These originals must then, as individuals, be eternal, and so be unlike the existing order—which overthrows the theory that the existing order is eternal ; or these original progenitors must have existed only a limited time before they had progeny—which reduces the races to the limitation of time, and requires us to account for how that which had no existence acquired existence. These illustrations must suffice. They of course could be indefinitely extended. It all returns to the predication with which we started : an order of succession—whether it be of simple increments of time, or serial motions, each of a definite duration, or race orders in which one generation follows another—cannot possibly be eternal. The postulate therefore of the eternity of the existing cosmos is necessarily false. The order in all its parts had a beginning. There was a first movement of all the heavenly bodies, a first day and a first night, a first man, and a first of each of the species of life—and all subsequent parts, including the first, fall within beginnings—that is, within time. That only can be eternal whose mode of existence is not in an order of succession—whose duration is not divisible into measurable parts.

We come now to the second form of the postulate ; namely : the inorganic universe is eternal. By the inorganic universe is meant the primitive elements of things, by the combination of



which, the supposition of its eternity requires us to assume, the organic cosmos arose. These elements are the infinitesimals of matter — matter reduced to its ultimates — monads, atoms. Science enables us to know that all solid things, or palpable and visible forms of things, can be reduced to a point where all appearance of matter vanishes, and then by recombinations solid and visible forms may be restored again.

The theory is, that these elements are eternal, unoriginated; the one eternal substance out of which the phenomenal universe, that is, the universe that appears, is evolved. The elements of the universe not eternal. There is probably no room to doubt that the primitive condition of matter—that is, not its eternal but its primary form—was precisely that which is here described; and it is probably true that from these infinitesimal atoms by some deft law of combination and composition the whole beautiful structure of the material cosmos arose, by successive evolutions, extending over almost limitless ages. The theory teaches, that the forces by which the cosmos was evolved and the law regulating their action were eternally inherent in these eternal monads—that the cosmos is thus self-originated. If true, the supposition of course does away with any proper personal creative cause. It has this in its favor, that it recognizes eternal being—eternal force, and eternal law, and an order of evolution or process of coming into phenomenal cosmical condition, and in the exact order in which it did probably arise. It fairly escapes the folly of supposing the present cosmical order to be eternal, and the still, if possible, greater absurdity of supposing that it arose out of non-existence without cause. It goes back as nearly as possible to spirit for its start, by reducing all matter to invisible and impalpable atoms; thus educing the phenomenal cosmos from primitive non-phenomenal being. And yet still further, by investing the non-phenomenal substance with force working according to a law, as nearly a defi-

nition of mind as possible, to escape it. It is an ingenious form of pantheism. We have indicated what in the theory may possibly be true; it remains that we show wherein it is false; and we shall find that its falsity is fundamental and its truth incidental.

Fundamental to the theory is the postulate that matter is eternal, and that it only is eternal—the one eternal substance, and the one only substance; thus denying the existence of spiritual being, and eliminating it from the universe—a species of monism, reducing, as it does, the world-ground to unity, but as we shall see to an inadequate unity. The two arguments upon which it rests are, first, the alleged impossibility of accounting for its existence on the hypothesis that it is not eternal; and its sufficiency to account for all phenomena on the hypothesis that it is eternal, both of which positions we will endeavor to prove are untenable. The first hypothesis alleges in its support the maxim of the old materialists: “*Ex nihilo nihil fit*”—from nothing nothing can be. This is an undoubted truth; no axiom is more indefeasible. But it falls short of proof of that which it is alleged to prove. It is not pretended that matter arose out of nothing. Its existence is accounted for by the hypothesis that it is the product of eternal power exerted by an eternal spirit, not that it emanated from nothing. The contest is between the two theories of its self-existence and its derived existence. And it is the right of that theory to prevail which can furnish the strongest proof, or, in other words, which best explains the facts of the cosmos.

In the solution it is of no value to declaim upon the mystery of the supposed creative act, since the mystery is not diminished but is rather increased by the alternative supposition. Direct proof of the non-eternity of matter is perhaps as impossible as proof of its eternity; but that does

Eternity of  
matter subver-  
sive of spirit-  
ual being.



not make the cases equal, since as we shall show all the indirect proofs are in support of the former hypothesis. That only can be shown to be eternal whose eternity is a necessary postulate to account for the existence of the cosmos. The eternity of matter is not such a postulate. The existence of the cosmos can be accounted for on the postulate of an eternal spirit of power to create matter, and, as we shall see, not without it. If this can be shown we demonstrate the necessity of an eternal spirit-factor, and the non-necessity of the eternal existence of matter; and that which has not in it the quality of necessary existence cannot be eternal. Now, if it could be shown that the eternity of matter and force would as well account for all phenomena as the opposite theory, the arguments pro and con would be equal; but this we hope to prove is not the case, and this is the precise issue.

It has appeared that the organized cosmos is certainly an effect, and that it necessarily falls within time—had a beginning. It is also certain that the Being who is ultimate cause is necessarily eternal, since had there once been a time when no being existed there never could have been any being, unless we suppose being to arise out of nothing, which is an impossible conception. Existence of any kind, at any time, involves the necessity of being of some kind from eternity. But it also follows, that as all changes in modes of being fall within time, the eternal is *immutable* in all respects in which it is eternal; and as causation implies an act or exercise which is followed immediately by effect, and as the effect is in time, it results that the exercise of power necessarily involves the fact also of a beginning. It results that the eternal could not have been an eternal actor. From eternity it existed, not as actual cause, but only as possible or potential cause. To become cause it must put itself under conditions of time, not as to being, but as to activity—that is, under the condition of beginning

2

to act causationally. It follows that the primal cause must be a free cause—must be able to exist without translating itself into action, and must so have existed from eternity, and must be able to begin to act, which it did when it became cause. Back of all causation lies the eternity of its being, when there was no such thing as effect, and, therefore, no causal activity. This, it appears to us, is a necessary truth, and from it we deduce the impossibility that matter should be the eternal cause, or that it should itself be eternal, unless we separate matter from the forces which act in or from it, or unless we raise it to the grade of a free cause; neither of which are we permitted. Science postulates that the forces in matter are necessarily active—existence is action. Some of the later definitions of matter make it mere force—individualized force-centers—visible motion. All such definitions, of course, necessitate the conclusion that matter is the exact equivalent of change, or that whose essence is to produce change. Where no change is there is no matter; but this precludes the possibility that it should be eternal. There is in the subject no power or possibility of restraint, no self-control, no governing power that determines when its power shall be held in reserve and when it shall be released, or in what measure or to what end it shall act. Now, if we are to suppose that these forces of matter are cause of the organized cosmos, and if it be true, as we have seen that it is, that the organized cosmos is an effect whose entire evolution falls within time, the question is, How does it appear that these forces are eternal? It matters nothing how remote soever we fix the beginning of the cosmical effect, a solid eternity lies behind it in which these forces did not act. The proof is on the thesis of their necessary activity, that they did not exist. The case is different with a free force, or a being who has power to act but who does not necessarily put the power in action.



When we examine the evolution of force in the light of facts as exhibited to us by scientific research we find that, as compared with imaginable time, it is but recent. The whole history of the evolution of material force lies before us, and falls within the limits of computable time. We trace the river to its source, we mount the stream of consecutive effects until we find the beginning, the fissure of the rock whence it bursts. Standing here at the top of the ages, and looking backward over the dreary waste of an eventless eternity, the question presses us, How were these forces, assuming them to have existed—which is the postulate not of science but of so-called atheistic science—employing themselves? They could not have existed and remained inactive, for it is the postulate that activity is their necessity. They were not active, for we have detected them in their primal evolution, or traced them to the beginnings of their activity. The demonstration is, that they were not at all. The case is thus put by an eminent scientist; having propounded the molecular condition of matter, he says: "This condition of matter is necessarily primordial. As matter could not have remained in such a condition—as in fact it did not remain in such a condition—the career of matter must have had a commencement. Its evolutions are not from eternity. As its earliest existence involves an evanescent condition, the existence of matter had a commencement. It began to exist only when it began to change." \*

"The geological argument is to the same effect. Geologists, as a class, agree as to the following facts: (1.) That the extant *genera* of plants and animals inhabiting our earth began to be within a comparatively short period in the history of our globe. (2.) That neither experience nor science, neither fact nor reason, justify the assump-

Agreements of  
geologists.

\* Winchell, "World-life, or Comparative Geology," pp. 487, 488.

tion of spontaneous generation. That is, there is no evidence that any living organism is ever produced by mere physical causes. Every such organism is either immediately created or is derived from some other organism having life, already existing. (3.) Genera and species are permanent. One never passes into another. A fish never becomes a bird, nor a bird a quadruped. Modern theorists have, indeed, questioned these facts; but they still are admitted by the great body of scientific men, and the evidence in their favor is overwhelming to the ordinary mind. If these principles be considered, it follows that all the extant plants and animals of the earth began to be. And if they began to be, they were created, and, therefore, there must be a creator." \*

But, given matter and what are called inherent and eternal forces, we are still as far as ever from accounting for the cosmos. We have found a cause, but not *the cause*; or, rather, we have found an eternal something that is not a cause. A cause that is not *the cause* to the effect in question is *no cause*. The cause carries in it the entire effect; for as the effect can have nothing which it does not derive from its cause, it must then have been in the cause. For, observe, the completed cosmos is not simply a mass held by force of gravitation, massed by cohesive attraction, assorted by chemical affinity, magnetized by electro-galvanism, turned into globes by evolutions of force; it is more than all this: it is an The cosmos an arranged and adjusted unity. arranged and adjusted unity, reached by taking the discrete forces and combining them into one great, universal whole, of ineffable ingenuity and skill; a plan in which each distinct part exists for a purpose, is controlled by a purpose, is subjugated to a purpose. We must find the home of this purpose—this factor that subjugates and makes slaves of all the other forces—if we would account for the cosmos. The

\* Hodge, vol. i, p. 212.



purpose displayed is as veritable a fact, as well known and accredited a reality, as chemical affinity, or cohesive attraction, or electricity, and can no more be ignored in solving the problem than can gravitation. But while it is as much a reality as the other forces, it is discrete, is a force itself; not a mere resultant, not an accident. Nay, it is seen to be not only a force discrete, existing apart from the others in its own right, but seen to be the most masterful of all, taking the others and compelling them to do its behests. Now, this august power, this *causa causarum*, must be accounted for; this omnipotent purposing agent, forcing all forces to work out its design, to accomplish its will, nay *His* will, for we are beyond things, will insist that we notice him. Where shall we find his home? Is he, like gravitation, a discrete quantity of all matter? Science goes forth with its instruments of inquisitorial torture, and subjects all substances to the "*experimentum crucis*," and each atom, even to the last, responds, It is not in me. All, with one accord, point backward, and declare with one voice, We know not of either our beginning or the cause that we are as we are. Each respondent says, I am not my own master; I am the slave of another, whose bidding I do. This is the testimony of all nature extorted by science. Thus it is discovered that a pre-existing will-force, guided by unerring intelligence, lies behind all so-called natural forces, giving them existence, or guiding them as it will to the accomplishment of its own imperial behests. No approach is made toward explaining cause until we reach the unific force in its transcendental home.

But we have only begun to intimate the insuperable difficulties which science herself interjects against the theory that inherent forces of matter account for the cosmos, without the aid of a personal cause. I will name one more. Starting with primordial state of matter, we have

Necessity of a  
personal cause.

the atoms in severance, each with its definite affinity; the whole lying disseminated over the infinite fields of space—wider than the boundaries where outermost suns now flame their glare upon the fields of ancient night. Forthwith, by a uniform necessity, atom rushes to the embrace of atom; the infinite abyss trembles into visible fiery forms; masses segregate and press inward toward their centers; each severed mass becomes the nucleus of a system of worlds. It is the splendid exordium of creation's pomp. Then follow ages—how long science will only aid us to conjecture, but tells us almost eternal—before the flaming vortexes become orderly, quiet globes of glowing homogeneous matter; myriads of ages more, and the molten masses have cooled, and their solid surfaces present the appearance of a crystal cosmos, each globe a radiant, flaming crystal in itself; infinite ages more muster out to the drum-beat of the rolling spheres, and yet it is an azoic cosmos; ages how long since the morning broke, and yet no eye to behold the pomp; a universe without life! Whence shall life come? The universe says, It is not in me; each crystal world says, It is not in me; the mechanical and chemical forces cry out, It is not in us; we fashioned these worlds, but we have no power to make a tree, or even a seed, an embryo, or an animal. Thus, science again tells us, we must find help *ab extra*.

There is a curious problem, right in this connection, which we would be pleased to have solved by that class of scientists who would explain all being by inherent laws of matter, or by inherent forces acting uniformly and necessarily; it is this: How, that is, in what order, did they, the forces, introduce life? Did they first evolve a seed, and from it grow a plant; or did they first make a plant without a seed? We are curious to know the answer. One of the two alternatives must have been the order at the beginning; for in no other way could life arise. But, whichever alternative be taken, science presents a



difficulty which is insurmountable. The thesis of science is, the forces act uniformly and necessarily; but now it is known that no forces make a seed-life without a parent plant to produce it, and no forces make a plant-life without a seed to grow it. The necessary and eternal forces, if they be sole factors, it is thus seen must have changed their method; and this is what science says cannot be. Nothing is more settled, or scientifically certain, than that there was a time when there was no life on this planet, and that there was a time when it began; and no man is warranted in saying that any explanation has been given of its origin, except by absolute creation.

I quote from Chadbourne another form of putting the same point: "Life is only manifested in connection with organization. Did the vital principle seize upon matter and organize it? This would imply that it resides somewhere free from matter. Is vitality a force accidental in its manifestation, correlated to some other force developed by the relationship of different kinds of matter, or was matter first organized by a creator and then life joined to it? There are those who accept the second supposition, and believe in spontaneous generation—the production of life from matter and physical forces, and the evolution of higher types by development from lower. We pass, for the present, the geologic argument, which we believe to be conclusive against this theory, and ask its supporters how it comes to pass that the physical forces tend to originate an organism when, the moment it is produced, they tend to destroy it? And it is a remarkable fact that some authors who have expressed their belief in the production of life through chemical forces have also expressed their belief in the antagonism of life and those forces. We leave to them the task of harmonizing their own views. The organic being struggles for existence, and lives only because the vital principle holds in abeyance the physical

Organization  
needful to the  
manifestation  
of life.

forces and makes them its servants. In a certain sense, it is true that the physical forces build up all organic structures; but the moment vitality is gone they tear down the structures which they have unwillingly labored to construct under its control, and they cease not their work until every particle has taken the inorganic form. In the perfectly adjusted steam-engine, moving the ship against wind and tide, or weaving finest fabrics with iron fingers, it seems to the thoughtful observer that the steam is a willing servant, bending its energies to the work. But the mission of the steam is to shatter and destroy. It rushes into the cylinder, not to move the machinery, but in the very hatred of itself, and struggles to escape. It is the genius of man that controls the struggling monster by bands of iron too strong for him to break, till, in his rage, he lifts the piston and moves the swift machinery as he darts howling into the air. Thus, also, does vitality control and use the adverse forces of the inorganic world. As well might we think that the steam which drives the piston originated the locomotive, or the locomotive the engineer that controls it, as to think that life is the offspring of electricity or any other physical force. It is latest born of all the forces, if it is proper to call it a force at all; and the time may come when it will vanish from our globe, and leave the physical forces victors on the field. But while it is here it holds its ground by warfare. It builds up only through the agency of the physical forces. They build organized beings only under its control. We have of late had the announcement made that we must expunge from our text-books the assertion that the vital principle overrides or controls the chemical forces. We may expunge it from the text-books, but we might as well expunge the satellites of Jupiter or the planet Neptune from our astronomies." \*

\* Chadbourne's "Natural Theology," pp. 49, 50.



“Every phase of matter seen in the universe is a transient one. The various phases sustain demonstrably some sort of historical relation to each other. These states of matter are progressive. We trace them backward toward earlier conditions—toward an earliest condition, beyond which we know no possibility of cosmical existence. From that condition to the present is but a finite career, however vast the interval appears expressed in numbers. The history began in time; it does not come down to us from eternity. The material organism is, therefore, originated in time. Now, when we carry our thoughts back to that primal condition indicated, we must necessarily perceive that it existed absolutely unchanged and unprogressive from all eternity, or the *matter itself* which exemplifies it did not exist from eternity. But we have not the slightest scientific ground for assuming that matter existed in a certain condition from all eternity, and only began undergoing its changes a few millions or billions of years ago. The essential activity of the powers ascribed to it forbids the thought. For all that we know, and indeed as the conclusion from all that we know, primal matter began its progressive changes on the morning of its existence. As, therefore, the series of changes is demonstrably finite, the life-time of matter itself is necessarily finite. There is no real refuge from this conclusion; for, if we suppose the beginning of the present cycle to have been only the restitution of an older order effected by the operations of natural causes, and suppose—what science is unable to comprehend—that older order to be a similar re-inauguration, and so on indefinitely through the past, we only postpone the predicate of an absolute beginning, since by all the admissions of modern scientific philosophy it is a necessity of nature to run down. No former condition is completely reproduced. The total energy in the cosmic organism diminishes. A finality is impending, and

hence a post-eternity would have sufficed to reach it an eternity since, and we should not be witnesses of the continued progress of events. Whatever process from an infinite beginning involved an end is now a process ended, not continuing. The conclusion is unavoidable, that the cosmic organism began in time, and that the very existence of matter is limited in the past.

“The dependent existence and finite origin of matter are revealed in its ultimate constitution. The scenes which we have been contemplating are characterized by ceaseless mutation and transformation. The very notion of an evolution presupposes this. The progressive activity of nature’s forces continually rebuilds the material organism. The old disintegrates and reappears transformed. Nothing is permanent. The ponderous forms of worlds come and go. Suns are kindled and extinguished. Constellations spread the floor of heaven for a time, to be swept away by the æonic march of events. In the progress of eternity how many cycles of world-life have been spent! what vicissitudes has each molecule of matter experienced! how many stations has it occupied! how many functions performed! But we pause. This very witness to cosmic changes testifies to something permanent and changeless. The molecule has not changed. As hydrogen, as silica, as water, or other forms of matter, it maintains its identity in all the worlds in all the remotest spaces of the realm of cosmic existence. It throbs in Sirius with the same signal as in Capella. Its vibrations are measured by the same infinitesimal in Orion and in the Sun, and the laboratory of the experimenter. The quartz molecule, which forms the gravel of the garden walk, is the same which slept for ages in the masses of archæan quartzite. When the quartzite came into existence the molecule was ancient. It had taken part in the history of the molten ages of the planet; it had been part of the primordial fire-mist in which



the first lines of cosmic organization were traced. It grows into nothing else; it grew out of nothing else; it is primordial, completed and perfect. It was not, like every thing else, compounded; it was not evolved; it does not disintegrate or become effete. The mutations which we have traced belong to the forms of matter. The molecule belongs to a different category of existence. If we conceive the molecule resolvable into atoms, then the conclusion remains of the atoms. Between the changeful and the changeless is an infinite gulf. And with all their qualities of permanence and indestructibility and perfection and uniformity, the molecule has been multiplied by millions of millions of millions—each molecule cast in the same mold, with the same form, animated by the same energies.

“How has it been multiplied? In a universe organized through processes of evolution, what is the origin of a thing unevolved? In a world of effects and causes what is the cause of a thing which had no antecedent? Our thought here trembles on the primal verge of being. *Beyond*—is the abyss of nothingness; *here*—are the seeds of the universe. These are not grown in the nursery of the natural world.

“The future life of cosmical organization is as clearly set within limits as the past. There is an ultimate goal toward which all cosmical matter is tending. That goal is not the actual condition of our world, for we see here every thing in a state of change; and the moon exemplifies an ulterior state. It cannot be the lunar phase, for even there solar light and heat, and terrestrial influences, and universal gravitation, and meteoric matter, and a pervading ether, are all conspiring to disturb the condition of absolute repose. The finality lies in the impenetrable darkness of the distant future. What it may be we can only conjecture; but one impending stage of all cosmical matter is positively written on the face of the moon. Not only must our own

planet reach finally that refrigerated and inhospitable condition, but the sun itself must ultimately fade to a darkened planet, and become extinguished in the heavens.

"These thoughts summon into our immediate presence the measureless past and the measureless future of material history. They seem almost to open vistas through infinity, and to endow the human intellect with an existence and a vision exempt from the limitations of time and space and finite causation, and lift it up toward a sublime apprehension of the Supreme Intelligence whose dwelling is eternity." \*

"The ultimate refrigeration of the sun and planets is only another expression for the dissipation of the energy of the system. As all the forms of energy in the known universe are mutually convertible, so also the tendency of the universe is toward the transmutation of all other forms of energy into heat. The tendency of heat is toward diffusion and equilibrium through the processes of radiation and conduction. In other words, the time is foreshadowed when all parts of the solar system and of the material universe will have attained a uniform thermal condition, and all exchanges of heat will have ceased. And this is the finality to be anticipated after all other forms of energy shall have been transformed into heat. In that eventuality, all the forces of nature will have attained an equilibrated or exhausted condition. No more motion—no more light or electricity or heat—the last course of physical change will have been completed.

"All the present motions of the universe, whether physical or psychological, are but the phenomena attendant upon the progression of matter toward a state of ultimate equilibrium. . . . The tendency of all physical forces toward a state of equilibrium and rest will result in a complete equilibrated diffusion

\* Winchell's "World-life, or Comparative Geology," pp. 489-491.



of self-repellent matter, and a concentration into one mass of all self-attractive matter. . . . It is not likely that the material universe is infinite. [The learned author might have said, it is impossible that it should be infinite.] When light, heat, electricity, and other imponderable agents (if any) shall have become uniformly distributed throughout matter, and have thus been brought to a state of equilibrium, both in themselves and in respect to matter, there cannot be either sun or star or other radiant source of light, heat, or any of the motions produced by these agents in the organic and inorganic worlds. There must have been a beginning to this series of evolutions."

Such deductions as these were reached very early by Sir W. Thomson. His conclusions are as follows: "(a) There is at present in the material world a universal tendency to the dissipation of mechanical energy. (b) Any *restoration* of mechanical energy without more than an equivalent dissipation is impossible in inanimate material processes, and is probably never effected by means of organized matter, either endowed with vegetable life or subjected to the will of an animated creature. (c) Within a finite period of time past, the earth must have been, and within a finite period of time to come the earth must again be, unfit for the habitation of man as at present constituted, unless operations have been or are to be performed which are impossible under the laws to which the known operations going on at present in the material world are subject."\* The author also refers to Helmholtz on the interaction of natural forces. Also Thayer.

"According to this doctrine the heat of our system, chiefly solar, on which all its activities depend, is undergoing a gradual dissipation in infinite space. It is not annihilated, but it is lost to us. In the distant future all parts of the system will

\* Professor William Thomson, "On a Universal Tendency to the Dissipation of Mechanical Energy," read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, April 19, 1882.

be reduced to the mean temperature of space, and the wheels of the organism will cease to move. We may anticipate that the cooling sun will pass through phases similar to those of forming planets. A liquid central globe will grow, and as it enlarges solidification will appear at the core. It will be- Great changes in the structure of the universe may be anticipated. come incrusted. Its light will grow ruddy and dim. The vapors of water will condense in the sun's atmosphere. A stormy stage of long duration will ensue. Surface waters will accumulate to some extent upon the darkened exterior. . . . Its own inherent warmth may, for a secular period, preserve a habitable temperature; but if organic creatures find existence on it, they must possess nocturnal instincts. Later on in the eternities this sunless planet—this exhausted and planetized sun—will have felt the chill of surrounding space. In the remotest finality which deductive science can reach, the sun and planets will have been gathered into one central mass. All fire and light will have been extinguished. No relative motion will survive—only the dead, cold course will rotate on an axis and travel onward in its mysterious, endless, aimless course through the eternities still to come.

“ Thus, with the telescope of deductive science, we are able to glance through the corridors of time to come, and anticipate with assurance the approach of events as remote in the coming direction as those primordial events in the opposite direction which we have seen connected with the cradle of the solar system. But it is so distant a glance all perspective is lost. Like the stars in the firmament, those events are projected on one common ground. It is impossible to assert in what order these final consummations will be realized. We only know they are inclosed in the future. . . . Whatever the order of progress toward these planetary issues, and to whatever distance removed, these tendencies are so many categories of change which demonstrate that a terrestrial and more generally a plan-



etary, and even a cosmical, finality must be reached. The world is finite in duration. The solar system is finite. The entire cosmical organism is finite in duration. That which is approaching a limit of existence in one direction has proceeded from a finite limit in the opposite direction. There was a time when the cosmical organism began to exist. Even if it was an older framework reorganized it was a new beginning. Whatever the number of times it has begun, there was a first time. If there was a first time, then at that moment cosmical existence was *out of the order of causal relations in the natural world*. If there was *not* a first organization, then the cosmic organism is eternal; *it does not run down or wear out; it is out of the order of causal relations in the natural world.*"\*

Argyll says: "In any case, therefore, we come back to the idea of all organic growths being implicit in their respective germs. It is quite true that in nature, as we now see it, these germs are always born from pre-existing organisms. But our reason tells us that this process must have had a beginning; and science, in so far as its evidence is available, indicates very clearly successive stages of creation, and times comparatively recent, when all existing genera began to be. The dictum seems to be true now, '*Omne vivum ab ovo.*' But the converse proposition, '*Omne ovum ab vivo,*' would involve us in an eternal series with no beginning. It can be true only in that transcendental sense in which we can affirm that every germ must have come from some great primal source and fount of life. But all reasoning and all evidence go to establish the conception that each of these germs has now, and has always had, its own fixed and predetermined line of march. In its wonderful, invisible, and incomprehensible structure, every ovum does not grow up to

Argyll on  
the world's  
changes and  
future.

\* Winchell's "World-life, or Comparative Geology," pp. 87-91.

the uses which are to be. We strain our imaginations to conceive the processes of creation, while in reality they are around us daily. Perhaps if we had been present at the birth of some new animal form we should have seen nothing very different from, and certainly nothing more wonderful than, we now see. It is only familiarity that has veiled their mystery. It is only thoughtlessness that makes us think that we are not, even now, in the middle of a truly creative work. It is most probable that at no stage of it, if we had been staring with all our eyes and listening with all our ears, would we have seen or heard any thing which is not to be seen and heard in the world around us. The first introduction of a germ would probably have been invisible. From the beginning creation would have seemed to us a growth and not a manufacture. Nor is it conceivable that there should have been then a wider difference between the first germs of things, and the forms and functions which were to be developed out of them, than the difference which in this respect prevails in the existing world, for this difference in many cases amounts to the most absolute contrast, and extends to every feature which is recognizable either by the senses or the intellect. Nor is this contrast confined to cases in which fragments of matter apparently formless swell and grow into complicated structures; it extends to cases in which creatures apparently perfect, and which are certainly highly organized, become changed in every thing which constitutes their visible identity. When we think of the mystery involved in the metamorphoses of insects and in the corresponding phenomena of alternate generation in other classes of the animal kingdom, we must see what unlimited possibilities of creation lie open in methods which are in full operation around us. In the higher animals the development of germs is carried on in vital and physical connection with the perfected organism of the mother, and the cycle of changes which

2



leads up to the completion of the parent form is a cycle which thus appears to be wholly governed by the surrounding media. But when we look at the metamorphoses of insects no such delusion is possible. A creature which to all appearance is fully formed, and which has led a separate and independent existence, suddenly lays itself to sleep. In that condition, without any food, without any contact with any directing physical agency external to itself, its organization is wholly altered, its whole body is re-arranged, its old members dissolve and disappear, new members emerge, and in a few days or weeks are perfected in form and in power. Moreover, that form and that power are both for uses which, so far as the creature's previous 'experience' is concerned, are absolutely new.

"With such 'leaps' as this in the creative work going on in every field and stream and sea around us, we may have the utmost confidence that the same work has involved the same principles through all time. From the beginning of it there has been no chance; none of its results have been attained by accident; none in physics by the mere clash of atoms, none in vitality by the mere 'struggle for existence.' Existence has come before struggle, and not after it. There never has been 'experience' till the faculties by which it is acquired have been first given and then set to work. There never has been any 'use' till the organs have been formed by which service could be rendered. Creation and evolution, therefore, when these terms have been cleared from intellectual confusion, are not antagonistic conceptions mutually exclusive. They are harmonious and complementary. In this aspect both conceptions are equally, thoroughly, and intensely anthropopsychic, both absolutely demanding, as a condition of the facts being rendered intelligible, that vitality should be recognized as an end before it can possibly have been made use of as a means. Under whatever cloud of words

Creation and  
evolution mu-  
tually comple-  
mentary.

men may endeavor to conceal it, our recognition of this universal fact and law in the genesis of organic functions is the recognition of mind by mind—the recognition by the human mind of operations which are intelligible to it only because they are operations having a close analogy with its own.” \*

Thus if we should concede the eternity of matter, it would still be impossible to account for the cosmos without the aid of a co-eternal factor wholly distinct from matter, and wholly unexpressed by the term, and the other terms simply descriptive of its known qualities and attributes.

By matter we mean the substances of which the visible universe is composed. The philosophical quibble about the existence of such a substance we understand, but it can have no practical bearing on the point in hand. We have seen that this substance as organized into the cosmic state falls within time necessarily. To account for the organized outcome is the problem.

The necessity for an overruling mind not avoided by assuming matter to be eternal.

Let us concede the eternal existence of every atom, what do we gain thereby? Will the atoms do any thing? If yes, what? How will they begin? How will they proceed? We are to conceive of them as diffused through space, each atom having a real and differentiable existence. It is a thing—it exists—it is itself—it cannot not be, it cannot be something else. As the atoms cannot change their identity neither can the mass. The only thing possible for them is to change their relations; but how can they do this? But allow that they may so change their relations by some inhering impulse or tendency issuing in motion; and, to make the case the strongest possible, let inhering tendencies of those affinities so called, and other laws of interaction, such as science now posits as inhering and working, result in collocation; what then? We shall then have as the outcome either an ultimate crystallized condition, in which

\* From “Unity of Nature,” pages 269–273, by Duke of Argyll.



all tendencies have reached their end, or a perpetual and endless flux of composition and decomposition in which tendencies reach no end. Neither of these is the cosmos as we have it. To obtain any other result, and especially the result as we find it, another factor must be introduced, which differs from the individual atom and also from the aggregate.

What is the outcome in point of fact? In general, the universe as we know it—the heavens and the earth. What we know of the heavens is comparatively little. We know with reasonable certainty that it is a vast expanse of worlds, flooding almost an infinity of space. We know that these worlds are of diverse orders and magnitude—some central, luminous, and heat-emitting and stationary; others opaque, rotary, and revolving; all arranged into groups, constituting systems among themselves, then in still wider groups into higher systems, ultimately all coming under one great, all-embracing system of related magnitudes and motions, moving forward through ages with a magnificence and exactness which transcend description. So much science gives us. Among them there is a balancing of forces which we have discovered, and to which we have given the common name of gravitation—holding them separately intact; and, under the force of attraction and repulsion, centripetal and centrifugal, into action maintaining the exact balance among themselves with absolute precision under their respective motions, so that security and harmony are preserved, and light and heat distributed in equable measures throughout. It is a wonderfully beautiful and apparently ingenious contrivance.

So far it is contended, with considerable show of argument, the result just as we find it might be brought about by the atoms themselves. Supposing certain force to be fixed in the infinite abysm, around which there should for any cause commence a rotary movement, atoms drawn under the known

laws of their affinities into combinations might roll together into common masses and so the whole abyss be segregated into individualized groups, which, acquiring a rotary motion within themselves, would become fixed at the center, and drawing together would become more and more compact and more and more separated from other masses by definite and fixed intervals of space. The rotary motion, it is well known, would tend to separate and throw off the exterior rim from the central mass, which, on account of the separation, might in a perfectly natural way develop a new center in itself, and roll up into a new individual ball, with a secondary rotary motion, New worlds thrown off by the rotary motion of the world-mass. maintaining its exact distance from the mass, and continuing to traverse an orbit around it and the point where it was separated. Thus in such cycles as eternity would supply each original mass might flower out in a group of worlds occupying its own place in space, the center point become the fixed luminary and heat-furnisher of the system, and the segregated globes forming into opaque planets—satellites forming around the planets in the same way. It is insisted that in sufficient time, by radiation of heat and effect of cohering forces, these segregated masses would become solid and cooled at the surface, so as to present the exact phenomena of day and night, and varying zones of climate and seasons which are found existing. The theory has taken form, and won a large scientific following, as the nebular hypothesis of the origin of worlds. There is good reason for supposing that as to method it is a probable approach to the truth.

But when it is put forth as the outcome of the self-inhering forces of eternally existing atoms, it encounters these difficulties: First, any process of motion or change must necessarily be temporal, that is, must have a beginning. Only the changeless can be eternal. This itself is fatal to the hypothesis. If it should be said that the atoms themselves do not change,



but only their relations, this supposes there could be an eternal flow of changing relations; but this is impossible if each relation is temporal—the eternal cannot be made out of a series of temporals—it is simply the fallacy of an infinite series in another form. But if it should be assumed that the atoms were at least eternal, and that change of relation at some time began, it would have to be shown how atoms which have been eternally at rest, and which have no power of self-motion, could, there being nothing else in existence to impart it, acquire motion. It must be obvious that once at rest they must remain at rest forever.

“A law of order inhering in nature, and acting potentially as the ultimate cause of the order therein existing, must, from the nature of the case, have existed and acted from eternity or not at all. Facts of order, therefore, resulting, must have been from eternity, and not events of time. No deduction has or can have more absolute validity than this. But the facts of order in nature are not from eternity, but are undeniably events of time. The ultimate cause of that order, therefore, is the agency of a free, self-conscious, personal God.”\*

But, second, if this difficulty were out of the way, others equally formidable remain. How, for instance, could it be accounted for that motion beginning should be in a line of perfect order and harmony, so that out of the anarchic mass there should spring a perfectly digested system? Is it possible to suppose that such a result could take place without guidance or superintendence? Or if we admit an eternal tendency in the atom, or an eternal flow of relations, how could we account for it that the tendency or flow should be such as to culminate in a system? By supposition there are as many actors determinative of relations as there are atoms. Each acting for itself according to its law, how, the problem is, can it be ac-

\* “Ingham Lectures,” p. 126.

counted for that the total outcome is intelligible, or construable as a thought-product, without supposing a governing factor common to all the atoms working to that end?

The nebular hypothesis, if it be supposed to be a method operated by an eternal personal agent, becomes both possible and probable, but it is beset with insurmountable objections as a purely physical theory. A personal creative cause would account for the origin of the atoms and their inhering laws; or a personal superintendence would bring about in a perfectly natural way the whole sidereal result, or the complete cosmic order as to worlds; and when the theory is put forth simply as a personal method it becomes worthy of notice. There is nothing in it inconsistent either with the Mosaic account or with the dictates of the highest reason.

If we suppose the atoms to be self-existing, as the materialist assumes, we have gained nothing until we determine also, self-existing with them, an eternal, free, personal power adequate to govern and direct them. And as we find them governed each by an exact and unchangeable law, we must suppose this co-existing agent to be actually handling them all forever, according to a fixed and unchangeable purpose and thought, to work out his own will. Thus if we could conceive him not to be the creator of the atoms themselves, we are still compelled to think him the creator of all the tendencies and movements in them. They are in this respect what they are, and they do what they do, not of themselves, but because of his almighty presence with and free working in them.

We can make no approach to accounting for the cosmic effect until we have posited a *free, self-existing* cause. The cause must have the quality of necessary existence, but must itself be free from the law of necessity as cause. While as eternal it is unfree as to its existence, as cause it must necessarily be free, having the power to refrain from action or to



commence action. There can be no eternal act which culminates in an effect, else the effect would be eternal also, which is a strict contradiction. There could be no act whatever without some eternal being. Thus in order to the universe, which is demonstrably a temporal or originated thing, there must be (*a*) an eternal or unoriginated Being, and (*b*) a Being who is free in the action which produces the universe. The cosmos demonstrates an eternal and free cause exterior to itself—a cause with power to create and govern it.

Professor Bowne says, and we quote him :

“The world-ground must be absolute and infinite, and these attributes (it is alleged by Spencer and others) are incompatible with consciousness and personality. In considering this objection we first remark that personality is not to be confounded with corporeality, or with form of any sort. This confusion underlies the traditional criticism, dating back to Xenophanes, that speculating cattle would infer a god like themselves. Oxen, buffaloes, and even watches have been used to illustrate this profound objection. But if a speculative watch should conclude, not to springs, levers, and escape-ments, but to intelligence in its maker, it would not seem to be very far astray. By personality, then, we mean only self-knowledge and self-control. Where these are present we have personal being; where they are absent the being is impersonal. Now that the ability to know itself and what it is doing should be denied to the ground and source of all power and knowledge, is a denial so amazing as to require the best reasons to support it. It is really one of the most extraordinary inversions in speculation, and a striking example of the havoc which can be wrought by using words without attending to their meaning.

“And first it is said that all consciousness involves the distinction of subject and object, and hence is impossible to an

isolated and single being. It is, then, incompatible with both the infinity of the world-ground and with its singleness. As infinite, it can have nothing beyond itself, and as only it can have no object. But this claim mistakes a mental form for an ontological distinction. The object in all consciousness is always only our presentations, and not something ontologically diverse from the mind itself. These presentations may stand for things, but consciousness extends only to the presentations. In self-consciousness this is manifestly the case. Here consciousness is a consciousness of our states, thoughts, etc., as our own. The Infinite, then, need not have something other than himself as his object, but may find the object in his own activities, cosmic or otherwise.

“This fact contains the answer to another form of objection. The *ego* and *non-ego* are said to be two correlative notions, neither of which has any meaning apart from the other. Hence the conception of the self can arise only as the conception of the not-self arises with it; and hence, again, self-consciousness is possible only for finite beings who are limited by a not-self.

“It is only with effort that one can believe the first part of this claim to be seriously made. Two notions whose meaning consists in denying each other are pure negations without any positive content. Thus *A* is not-*B*, and *B* is not-*A*; and hence *A* is not-not-*A*, and *B* is not-not-*B*. We end where we began. To make any sense, one of the notions must have a positive meaning independent of the other. And in the case of *ego* and the *non-ego*, it is plain which is the positive notion. The *ego* is the immediately experienced self, and the *non-ego* is originally only the sum of mental presentations, or that which the *ego* sets over against itself in consciousness as its object. Secondarily, the *non-ego* comes to mean whatever is excluded from the conscious self. Each person sets all his objects,



whether persons or things, over against himself, and they constitute the non-ego for him. By overlooking this ambiguity, some speculators have proved a rich variety of truths. Idealism has been confounded by pointing out that consciousness demands an object as well as a subject, and the reality of matter has been solidly established. Consciousness demands a non-ego; and is not matter pre-eminently a non-ego?

“The further claim that the conception of self can arise only as the conception of a not-self accompanies it, is but a repetition of the preceding objection concerning the ego and non-ego. Consciousness does involve the co-existence of these conceptions as the form under which consciousness arises, but not as things ontologically diverse. The distinction of subject and object, on which consciousness depends, is only a mental function, and not an ontological distinction. The possibility of personality or self-consciousness in no way depends on the

Personality dependent on the ability to know itself.

existence of a substantial not-self, but only on the ability of the subject to grasp its states, thoughts, etc., as its own. It is, indeed, true that our consciousness begins, and that it is conditioned by the activity of something not ourselves; but it does not lie in the notion of consciousness that it must begin, or that it must be aroused from without. An eternal, unbegun self is as possible as an eternal, unbegun not-self. Eternal consciousness is no more difficult than eternal unconsciousness; and withal, if unconsciousness had ever been absolute there is no way of reaching consciousness. In addition, all the skeptical difficulties which attend that view crowd upon us. Hence to the question, What is the object of the Infinite's consciousness? the answer is, The Infinite himself, his thoughts, states, etc. To the question, When did this consciousness begin? the answer is, Never. To the question, On what does this consciousness depend? the answer is, On the Infinite's own power to know.

“On all these accounts we regard the objections to the personality of the world-ground as resting on a very superficial psychology. So far as they are not verbal, they arise from taking the limitations of human consciousness as essential to consciousness in general. In fact, we must reverse the common speculative dogma on this point, and declare that proper personality is possible only to the absolute. The very objections urged against the personality of the absolute show the incompleteness of human personality. Thus it is said, truly enough, that we are conditioned by something not ourselves. The outer world is an important factor in our mental life. It controls us far more than we do it. But this is a limitation of our personality rather than its source. Our personality would be heightened rather than diminished if we were self-determinant in this respect. Again, in our inner life we find similar limitations. We cannot always control our ideas. They often seem to be occurrences in us rather than our own doing. The past vanishes beyond recall; and often in the present we are more passive than active. But these, also, are limitations of our personality. We should be much more truly persons if we were absolutely determinant of all our states. But we have seen that all finite things have the ground of their existence, not in themselves, but in the infinite, and that they owe their peculiar nature to their mutual relations and to the plan of the whole. Hence, in the finite consciousness, there will always be a foreign element, an external compulsion, a passivity as well as activity, a dependence on something not ourselves, and a corresponding subjection. Hence in us personality will always be incomplete. The absolute knowledge and self-possession which are necessary to perfect personality can be found only in the absolute and infinite Being upon whom all things depend. In his pure self-determination and perfect self-possession only do we find the con-

2



ditions of complete personality ; and of this our finite personality can never be more than the feeblest and faintest image.

“In leaving this subject a word must be said about a series of objections from the agnostics. These hold that the world-ground is no object of thought whatever, and hence cannot be thought of as personal or impersonal, as intelligent or non-intelligent. The reason is found in the mutual contradictions alleged to exist between the necessary attributes of the fundamental being. Thus we must regard it as self-centered, and hence absolute ; as unlimited by any thing beyond itself, and hence infinite, and as world-ground, that is, as first cause. But while we are shut up by thought to these admissions, we are equally shut out from them by their mutual contradiction. Thus the first cause, as such, exists only in relation to the effect. If it had no effect, it would not be cause. Hence the first cause is necessarily related to its effect ; and hence it cannot be absolute ; for the absolute exists out of all relations. The absolute cannot be a cause, and a cause cannot be absolute. Nor can we help ourselves by the idea of time, as if the world-ground first existed as absolute, and then became a cause ; for the other notion of the infinite bars our way. That which passes into new modes of existence either surpasses or sinks below itself, and in either case cannot be infinite, for the infinite must always comprise all possible modes of existence. Hence we have in these necessary attributes a disheartening, and even sickening, contradiction which shatters all our pretended knowledge.

“If this argument had not passed for important, we should refer to it only with expressions of apology. In itself it is mainly a play on words. Etymologically the above meanings may be tortured out of the terms. The infinite may be taken as the quantitative all ; the absolute may be taken as the unrelated ; and then the conclusions follow. The infinite as quantitative

all must, of course, be all-embracing. Outside of the all there can be nothing; and if the all must comprehend all possible modes of existence at all times, it cannot change; and the universe is brought to the rigid monotony of the Eleatics. It is equally easy to show that the absolute cannot be related when we define it as the unrelated. But all this wisdom disappears when we remember the philosophical meaning of the terms. Both absolute and infinite mean only the independent ground of things. Relative existence is that which exists only in relation to other things. Both the ground and form of its existence are bound up in its relations. Such relations are restrictions, and imply dependence. But absoluteness denies this restriction and dependence. The absolute may exist in relations, provided those relations are freely posited by itself, and are not forced upon it from without. The infinite, again, is not the quantitative all. This 'all' is purely a mental product which represents nothing apart from our thought. The world-ground is called infinite, because it is believed to be the independent source of the finite and its limitations, yet without being bound by them except in the sense of logical consistency. But in this sense the notions of the absolute and infinite are so far from incompatible that they mutually imply each other, or are but different aspects of the same thing. The infinite would not be infinite if it were not absolute; and neither infinite nor absolute would be any thing if it were not a cause.

"A final affectation must be mentioned. The claim has been set up that to attribute design of any kind to God is a limitation. This claim rests upon the fact that we often use design as equivalent to contrivance, and contrivance, in turn, has various meanings. It may be the equivalent of design, or the adaptation of parts; and it may be a makeshift for avoiding difficulties, or a combination of things or processes for doing



indirectly what our power or skill could not directly accomplish. Here, then, is a fine opportunity for critical acumen, and it has not been overlooked. We have but to take contrivance as implying puzzle-headedness or inadequacy to see that it cannot be affirmed of God."

It is possible for the Infinite Being to put forth power and to act while he continues unchanged. In putting forth power there is only an exercise of his own nature, and he does not thereby change either for the better or the worse. The transition (if such it can be called, for human language is inadequate to such applications) from one state to another, from non-activity in this particular direction to positive action resulting in the creation of finite beings, involves no change in him. And so, in like manner, his actions regarding his creatures imply no change in the Infinite One. *How* this can be is not a question to be considered at present; but it is essential to mark at this point that our primary belief in the divine existence positively affirms the fact. Our belief rises into consciousness in connection with the recognition of finite existence, and points to God as the first cause, sustainer, and governor of all. It distinctly involves the assertion that God did begin to act, and does continue to act, while he is still infinite and unchangeable.

To affirm that it is not as infinite that the Deity acts must be a contradiction; for though he only put forth a measure of power adequate to produce a certain finite result, all his actions must be those of a being essentially infinite.

To affirm this concerning the nature of the Being who acts is nothing more than to say that it is as an infinite being, and not as a finite being, that God acts. We are therefore, by the authority of faith, debarred from all reasoning concerning the act of creation, or any one of God's acts, as though it implied a change in God himself, or the necessity "to pass either from

the better to the worse, or from the worse to the better." In like manner Dr. Mansel is unwarranted in his positive declaration that "a cause cannot, as such, be absolute; the absolute, as such, cannot be a cause." \* In these words he may intend to speak only of what is involved in the *conception* of a cause and of the absolute respectively, but it involves a distinct affirmation concerning the *absolute, as such*, that not only is unwarranted but contradicted by our faith. Nay, more, it is even inconsistent with his own definition of the absolute. He says: "By the absolute is meant Mansel's definition of the term absolute. that which exists in and by itself, having no *necessary* relation to any other being." I accept the definition most unreservedly, but I add that, so far from being a definition of something contradictory of a first cause, it most distinctly applies to the first cause, by which unquestionably "is meant that which exists in and by itself, having no *necessary* relation."

To this it is answered that it is not the absolute, *as such*, which acts as a cause, for "the absolute, as such, *cannot* be a cause;" to which I reply that it is most certainly not the relative, as such, which acts as first cause, and that it is the absolute, as such, and nothing else; or, more Remarks on above definition. appropriately, that it is the absolute Being, in all his essential excellence, who acts as first cause. This is the simple declaration of faith testifying to a matter of fact; and though acting as a first cause does imply a relation, it is not a "necessary relation," and, therefore, involves nothing inconsistent with the nature of the absolute. The whole truth on this point is most simply and admirably put by Sir W. Hamilton in these few words: "The divine nature is identical with the *most perfect nature*, and is also identical with the *first cause*. If the first cause be not *identical* with the most perfect nature there is no God, for the two essential conditions

\* "Limits of Religious Thought," p. 47.



of his existence are not in combination." \* *Our belief in the divine existence does not declare whether there may or may not be a relation within his own being.*

The deliverance of the fundamental belief implanted in our nature is, that the absolute and infinite cannot exist in any *necessary* relation to any thing beyond his own being. In other words, the existence of some object beyond himself cannot be an essential condition of the divine existence. But if the question be raised concerning the possibility or impossibility of any relation *within* the essence of the absolute Being, all inquiry on philosophical grounds must be stayed, for the deliverance of faith involves no declaration on the matter. With a just regard to the requirements of the inquiry, Dr. Mansel has embraced, in his definition of the absolute, what I had omitted in the former edition of this work, namely, that when it is said that the absolute is that which has no *necessary relation*, it is meant that it has no necessary relation "*to any other Being.*" This is certainly an accurate statement of what we believe to be true of the absolute, but we have no means of determining whether there may be certain essential relations within his own nature. We do, indeed, believe that the divine Being is possessed of certain attributes, and in so far as the term "necessary relation" may be applied to these it is no doubt expressive of a fact; but the primary belief implanted in our nature does not conduct us to the recognition of any such essential relations within the divine Being as revelation has made known in the doctrine of the Trinity. Philosophy neither affirms nor denies any thing concerning the possibility of such a relation. I hold, therefore, that Dr. Mansel has gone beyond the bounds of his own definition of the absolute, and ventured on an assertion wholly unwarranted, when he says: "Not only is the absolute, *as conceived*, incapa-

\* "Discussions," p. 36.

ble of a necessary relation to any thing else, but it is also incapable of containing, *by the constitution of its own nature*, an essential relation within itself; as a whole, for instance, composed of parts, or as a substance consisting of attributes, or as a conscious subject in antithesis to an object." \*

It is somewhat singular that our author, who argues so strongly that there can be no conception of the absolute, should nevertheless so unhesitatingly affirm what is true of "the absolute as conceived," and still further what must be true of the absolute "by the constitution of its own nature." But passing this, it is distinctly contradictory of a necessary conviction in our mind to deny to the absolute the possession of attributes; and, on other grounds, it is altogether unwarranted to assert that the absolute is "incapable of containing an essential relation within itself." After having thus indicated the most important consequences that clearly flow from the acknowledgment of a necessary belief in the existence of the infinite God, it seems necessary to glance at the chain of contradictions said to be involved in the relation of the infinite to the finite. Dr. Mansel is distinguished for a very frequent reference to these, and remarkable facility in linking them together; but the reader of "The Limits of Religious Thought" may observe that while the almost innumerable contradictions pointed to are said to arise in connection with the assertion of a conception of the infinite, the statement of them is made to embrace certain distinct declarations concerning the infinite as existing.

One group of contradictions, from among the many given by Dr. Mansel, may be taken by way of illustration. He says:

"The *conception* of the absolute and infinite, from whatever side we view it, appears encompassed with contradiction. There is a contradiction in supposing such an object to exist, whether alone or in conjunction with others; and there is a

\* "Limits of Religious Thought," p. 49.



contradiction in supposing it not to exist. There is a contradiction in conceiving it as one; and there is a contradiction in conceiving it as many. There is a contradiction in conceiving it as personal; and there is a contradiction in conceiving it as impersonal. It cannot without contradiction be represented as active; nor, without equal contradiction, be represented as inactive. It cannot be conceived as the sum of all existence; nor yet can it be conceived as a part only of that existence."\* I do not at present inquire what may be the bearing of all this on the question whether it is possible for man to form a conception of the infinite and absolute; but nothing can be more obvious than the fact that we are all able, without the least hesitation, to choose between the relative contradictions presented in this chain. If we have any belief at all in an infinite God, it must enable us to make certain affirmations concerning his existence, and that so distinctly as to enable us to pronounce definitely on any such array of alleged contradictions. Will our author consent to remove "the vague generalities of the absolute and the infinite," and employ, instead of these, "the sacred names and titles of God," altering the sentences to suit the difference in phraseology, and still stand responsible for the assertions they contain? Any man looking down the list can tell at a glance which of the respective alternatives he will accept as most certainly applicable to the divine Being, and which he will reject as undoubtedly false. In fact, nothing more is necessary for this than to read down the first clause in each sentence as distinct assertions, and thereafter the second clause in each, as certain violations of truth concerning the deity, until the last sentence is reached, when both clauses must be set aside. The series of affirmations is nothing more than this: that the divine Being does necessarily exist; has existed from all eternity, for an immeas-

\* "Limits of Religious Thought," p. 58.

urable period alone, and now exists in conjunction with finite beings; that he is one; that he is personal; and that he is active. I unhesitatingly deny the assertions that the Deity "does not exist," that he is "many," that he is "impersonal," and that he is "inactive;" and it is gratifying that it may be added, Dr. Mansel denies them all too.\*

"In reference to the last sentence in the quotation given, it is to be observed that both clauses are to be rejected as containing assertions inconsistent with the divine existence. God is not 'the sum of all existence,' nor yet is he 'a part only of that sum;' and though I am not at present concerned with the question of what we may *conceive* of the Divine Being, it may be remarked that it would be nothing wonderful if contradictions were found surrounding attempts to think of God *as he is not*, that is to say, to think of him in a way which is contradictory of his own nature. To speak of the '*sum*' of existence, or of its 'parts,' is to speak exclusively of *finite* existence, as distinguished from the Infinite Being, for a '*sum*' implies 'parts' of which it is composed, and a 'part' implies a whole made up of parts. But all this has no application whatever to the Deity, who is necessarily separate from all finite existence, and immeasurably raised above it. It may be consistent enough to speak of the sum of finite existence which he has created, or of any part of that sum; but to speak of him as if he absorbed all his works in his own being, or as if he could be classified along with his works, is altogether inconsistent, as a manifest violation of that primary belief on which all must depend for an authoritative declaration of the truth concerning the divine existence. The contradictions which Dr. Mansel has so industriously accumulated have no existence whatever when brought to the test of faith. He says that 'a contradiction thus thorough-going tells with

\* "Limits of Religious Thought," pp. 45, 120, etc.



*equal force* against all *belief* and all *unbelief*.' Now, as I have been careful to indicate, I do not here inquire what bearing these contradictions may have on the operations of the understanding when attempting to deal with the absolute; but I say that the professed thorough-going contradiction tells with *no force at all* against our belief in the one absolute God.

"In all declarations concerning the infinite Being there must be uniform reference to the fundamental datum of consciousness—in other words, a necessary connection of the mind, equally above all proof and doubt. A searching consideration of what is contained in this primary belief in the divine existence reveals to us the only infinite and absolute Being—the one infinite intelligence, the holy God, the self-existent, all-powerful first cause, sustainer, and ruler of all finite existence."\*

There are two fundamentally unressembling kinds of life appearing in organized matter; we say in organized matter for a purpose. There is a third kind, as we shall see, which does not inhere or pertain to organisms of matter. The two kinds are vegetable and animal. The fundamental difference is, that the first kind takes its alimentation from inorganic substances direct, and by a peculiar chemistry of its own; the second kind has no power to assimilate inorganic substances, but requires organized substances for its alimentation. They differ in every respect of expression, but in this respect radically. Each kind is found in almost endless variety, spreading over all the zones of the world. Of vegetables it is estimated there are hundreds of thousands of varieties that have been observed and classified. There may be a vast number yet flourishing that industrious botanists have not discovered. The extinct varieties are scarcely less numerous. Of animal varieties, of those that have been described in the book, the number reaches as

\* Calderwood's "Philosophy of the Infinite," chap. ii, pp. 91–98.

many. The extinct species are scarcely less. Besides those discernible by the eye, the microscope detects millions in a single drop of water! "The number of distinct species of insects already known and described," says Dr. Roget, "cannot be estimated at less than one hundred thousand, and every day is adding to the catalogue." No doubt can exist of the general truth that the microscope has shown all nature absolutely teeming with life—that wherever life can be sustained we find life produced. Leuwenhoek, Professor Ehrenberg, and others bewilder us with their statements. They declare that they can discover as many as eight million animalcules in a single drop of water. They have made the calculation, indeed, that five hundred millions of these monads, a number half as great as the population of the globe, inhabit a single drop. "And if we go to the infusorial animalcules of geology we shall find that we have not even yet reached the maximum. Dr. Ehrenberg, as quoted in a note to Dr. Smith's work on geological science, mentions animalcules of a particular description of fossil as in size only the thousandth part of a line, <sup>Notices of germ</sup> of which a cubic line is estimated by him double <sup>life.</sup> the number just given, even one billion." We confess to incredulity as to so great numbers, but that the number is very great there can be no reasonable doubt. What is our amazement when we are informed by these eminent authorities that they have been able to detect in these infinitesimal creatures muscles, intestines, teeth, different kinds of glands, eyes, nerves, and organs of reproduction! They find that some are born alive, others produced by eggs, and some multiplied by spontaneous divisions of their bodies into two or more distinct animals. Yet when we have admitted (and how can it be questioned?) the existence of the living creatures themselves, we cannot refuse to admit their having organization, various functions, and parts adapted for the performance of them, and



various means of self-propagation. We are, in fact, really as completely lost in attempting to think of the structure and the principle of life in one of these microscopic monads as in endeavoring to comprehend the complicated and stupendous movements of "all yon orbs with all their suns." Thus we see how vast and varied is this realm of life, how endless the complexity of its expression, how perfect and unvarying its diversified forms; yet we discover with no less clearness how all forms of life are related, and comprehensively constituting a grand and beautiful unity of extreme and almost infinite diversity. Throughout the entire realm the thing most conspicuously exhibited is forethought, pre-arranged adaptations, matchless skill of matchless mind.

The theory of evolution has elicited a large amount of attention, and any who may wish to pursue the study of it will do well to refer to the books which it has called forth on both sides of the question. We assert that for the marvelous conceit there is not a semblance of proof. There is no proof of spontaneous generation, without which evolution signifies nothing as against theism. In the course of a profound and even fascinating discourse of Prof. Tyn-  
 They furnish no proof of spontaneous generation.

dall on the subject of Germ Life, delivered before the Royal Institution, he repeatedly referred to the successful labors of Rev. W. H. Dallinger (Wesleyan) in this field of observation; and as the result of his own researches, and an examination of kindred examinations by other *savants*, he was constrained to come to the conclusion, to use his own words, that "there is not a shadow of evidence in favor of spontaneous generation. When I seek for experimental evidence of the transformation of the non-living into the living, I am led inexorably to the conclusion that no such evidence exists, and that in the lowest as in the highest of organized creatures the method of nature is, that life shall be the issue of antecedent life." He still carefully

guards himself against being understood to affirm that spontaneous generation is "impossible," but at the present it is absolutely unknown. There is no proof of evolution of species. Mr. Darwin has not been able to show a single case. There is no known fact which makes the theory probable. Not one. Professor Quatrefages, an eminent French scientist, pronounces the theory as developed by Darwin "a brilliant fancy which has no support in precise facts ; and in most cases it depends upon possibilities in flagrant opposition to facts. The idea of giving us the monkey as our ancestor is impressive, because it is new to certain persons though already ancient ; it is impressive by the species of liberty of thought that it seems to imply. In the name of scientific truth I can affirm that we have had for ancestor neither a gorilla nor a chimpanzee, any more than a seal or a fish, or any other animal whatever." \* There is nothing in the nature of the principle of life, as it is observed, to warrant it. There is the testimony of geology, as it has chronicled the history of life, against it ; universal observation is against it ; test cases of hybrids are against it ; fundamental organization is against it ; the instincts of animal races are against it ; the common sense and native intelligence of man are against it. It hypothecates the impossibility that an impersonal force should elaborate organic forms of infinite skill ; the impossibility that matter should blindly develop mechanism that should secrete thought ; that mind should spring from non-mind ; that there should be the highest proof of design where there is no design ; the absurdity that organs and faculties should grow out of wants in process of ages, the very absence of which would make existence impossible for a short time ! There never was as pure a speculation invented by the mind of man and attempted to be palmed off as science. There is no law of intelligence that it does

\* "Natural History of Man."



not outrage. If so, what? There is no fact or reasonable probability to give it countenance. If so, what? Upon what pretense are men asked to accept it? It is admitted by its advocates that the proof is wanting, and the reason assigned is, that its friends have not been able yet to discover it—that the record of the ages has not yet been sufficiently examined, and possibly the proof has been lost. Must men be asked to believe, against positive knowledge, on such grounds as these? and may they who make the demand brand those who decline assent as unscientific, as enemies to science, as unfriendly to progress, because they do not join in the headlong hurdle chase after the *ignis fatuus*, the silly dream of a brain crazed by its own fancies? Must men who still demand evidence, who yet respect reason and common sense, who hold on to the old-fashioned ideas that there is such a thing as mind, such things as cause and effect, as established order and harmony, as difference between men and brutes, as spirit in contradistinction from matter, as a moral nature, moral law, freedom, conscience, difference between right and wrong, responsibility, a God, a future life; must men who still hold on to such notions on the evidence of consciousness, on grounds of the discursive and intuitive reason, be held up to scorn as dolts or knaves, because they refuse at the bidding of nondescript haranguers to join the rabble of their following? Such rant and ribald folly may win notoriety and dazzle sciolists for a day, but so long as men remain better than such imbecile philosophism they can gain no permanent foothold among the human species.

Of this theory in both parts we have this to say: It is strictly unscientific. It has no facts. There is not a particle of proof of it. It is a sheer speculation. The defenders, though challenged from the first, have never been able to educe a single proof fact in its support. The interests of truth require that it

should not be baptized as science. There is no such principle known to science.

Tait, a high authority, says: "To say that even the very lowest form of life, not to speak of its highest forms, still less of volitions and consciousness, can be fully explained on physical principles alone—that is, by the mere relative motions and interactions of portions of inanimate matter however refined and sublimated—is simply unscientific. There is absolutely nothing known in physical science which can lend the slightest support to such an idea. In fact, it follows at once from the *laws of motion* that the material system, left to itself, has a perfectly determined future; that is, that upon its configuration and motion at any instant depend all its subsequent changes: so that its whole history, past and to come, is to be gathered from an almost instantaneous, if sufficiently comprehensive, glance. In a purely material system there is thus necessarily nothing of the nature of a free agent. To suppose that life, even in its lowest form, is wholly material, involves therefore either a denial of the truth of Newton's law of motion or an erroneous use of the term matter. Both are alike unscientific." \*

The question has assumed such proportions in modern thought that it demands more particular attention, and we may be pardoned for giving it a large place in this treatise.

The theories of Huxley as to the origin of life and of Darwin as to the diversified forms in which it manifests itself are now commonly put together as one. In fact, they have no necessary connection. Together they attempt to account for life in all its multiform expression without God; though the eminent theorists both profess some sort of belief in God. Huxley simply assumes that the fact of life does not prove his existence, and Darwin finds no use for him in accounting for the

\* "Popular Science Monthly," February, 1878, p. 346.



diversities of organisms. Between them they find no signs of his agency either in the fact of life or its multiform manifestations. The forces of matter alone contain the promise and potency of the entire result, as well as of all other phenomena, according to their collaborator, Prof. Tyndall.

It is a revamping of the old hylozoic theory, with this difference: that theory held the notion of unoriginated life—an eternal living matter which in the last resort was a form of pantheism. The modern notion seems to be that out of essentially dead matter life is evolved; that is, that life in some way comes from non-life. It would not be inconsistent with Huxley's view that the non-living matter which should become the source of life in one form should also be its source in every form, and this was his original conception: out of unorganized matter in the endless flux or change came all biological phenomena—every variety of organism and mode of life, from the insensate plant to the highest human consciousness.

Darwin's notion of evolution added the idea of evolutionary development; that is, that not only is life a development from non-living substance, but that the varied forms, or biological structures, are evolved from a single rudimental stem. That is to say, that when life appeared somewhere, at some time, it first assumed a low rudimental structural arrangement, say that of a fungus, or spore of vegetation, and from this in process of ages has sprung first better organized plants and then those of yet higher types.

In like manner all the phenomena of animal life are referred to the physical forces inseparable from the matter which composes the animal structure. It is true the functions of matter in the animal tissues are higher than in those of the plant. But the advocates of the theory under consideration endeavor to reduce the difference between animal and vegetable life to a minimum. It is only the upper surface of the leaf which

is susceptible of the peculiar effect of light. So it is only the optic nerve that is affected in a way which is necessary to vision. The sensitive plant contracts when touched; and so does the animal muscle when the proper stimulus, nervous or electric, is applied. In short, as all the operations of vegetable life are due to physical forces, so all phenomena of animal life are due to the same causes.

On this subject Professor Huxley says: "The matter of life is composed of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated. It is built up of ordinary matter, and again resolved into ordinary matter when its work is done."\* By protoplasm, or matter of life, he sometimes means matter which exhibits the phenomena of life; and sometimes matter which, having been elaborated by the plant or animal, is capable of supporting life.

"The only difference between inorganic, lifeless matter and living plants or animals is in the manner in which their atoms are aggregated. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of them carbon and oxygen unite, in certain proportions and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water; nitrogen and hydrogen give rise to ammonia. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life. I see no break in the series of steps in molecule complication, and I am unable to understand why the language that is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used of any of the others. . . . When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in certain proportions and an electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water, equal in weight to the sum of their

\* "Lay Sermons," p. 144.



weights, appears in their place. There is not the slightest parity between the passive and active powers of the water and those of the oxygen and hydrogen which have given rise to it.”\* “What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no representation or correlation in the not-living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has ‘vitality’ than ‘aquosity?’ And why should ‘vitality’ hope for a better fate than the other ‘itys’ which have disappeared since Martinus Scriblerus accounted for the operation of the meat-fork by its inherent meat-roasting quality, and scorned the materialism of those who explained the turning of the spit by a certain mechanism worked by the draught of the chimney. . . . If the properties of the water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its component molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of the molecules.”†

The doctrine, therefore, is, that certain acids, water, and ammonia, lifeless bodies, under certain conditions become living matter, not in virtue of any new force or principle communicated to them, but solely in virtue of a different arrangement of their molecules. Of this living matter all plants and animals are composed, and to the properties or physical forces inherent in the matter of which they are composed all the phenomena of vegetable and animal life are to be referred. “Protoplasm,” says Professor Huxley, “is the clay of the potter, which, bake it and paint it as he will, remains clay, separated by artifice and not by nature from the commonest brick or sun-dried clod.”‡ As the brick, no matter what its shape or color, can have no properties not inherent in the clay, so vegetable or animal organism can have no properties which do not belong

\* “Lay Sermons,” p. 149.

† *Ibid.*, p. 151.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

to protoplasm, which in the last analysis is nothing but carbonic acid, water, and ammonia.

“Some of the most distinguished living physicists, chemists, and naturalists,” says Dr. Beale, “have accepted this physical theory of life. They have thought that life is but a mode of ordinary force, and that the living thing differs from the non-living thing, not in quality, or essence, or kind, but merely in degree.”\* “So long,” says the same writer, “as the advocates of the physical doctrine of life contented themselves with ridiculing ‘vitality’ as a fiction and a myth, because it would not be made evident to the senses, measured or weighed or proved scientifically to exist, their position was not easily assailed; but now when they assert dogmatically that vital force is only a form or mode of ordinary motion, they are bound to show that the assertion rests on evidence, or it will be regarded by thoughtful men as one of the large number of fanciful hypotheses advocated only by those who desire to swell the ranks of the teachers and expounders of dogmatic science, which, although pretentious and authoritative, must ever be intolerant and unprogressive.”

The universe is being—not mere beingless power. God is a Being in whom infinite powers cohere. He could not be God without them, but they, abstract of being, are not <sup>Being distinguished from</sup> God. Man is a being, not abstract power. The <sup>power.</sup> great globes are being, and every infinitesimal atom is being, not mere force. God is sole source of all power, and he vests created substance, in different degrees and in different manners, with power. If this be not true consciousness is unreliable, and we are victims of hopeless delusion; our very nature misleads us—it teaches a lie. How then can we ever know what is truth? If what appears true to every test of reason is an organized deception, what conclusions can we trust? If we

\* “Protoplasm of Life, Matter, and Mind,” second edition, London, p. 3.



start with consciousness, what is its revelation? Is it simply the action of subjective power noting internal change? Certainly not. Its deepest revelation is of self-being or subject as source of activity. It does not predicate of itself I am power, but I have power. It sees itself behind or under its power. It says, I can and I do. It knows itself as having reserved forces—as having liberty.

It is asked what good does this supposition, this differentiation between power and substance or being, do; and it is asserted that power is alone sufficient to account for all phenomena—power abstract of being. The idea of a substance powerless, inert, it is alleged, is a useless surplusage. Power, it is said, needs no fulcrum. To this we answer, there cannot be even the concept of power without a conceiving mind; and the conceiving mind has not power to predicate reality of it, that is, of power, apart from the conception of some being of which or whom it is a power. The concept of power accounts for nothing: power not active is nothing but capacity unexerted: power never exerts itself. Of every movement which indicates power there are three implications: First, the mover, or being in which the power is latent; second, the power put in action; third, the effect resultant. The third and second depend upon the first. The power before it is exerted must exist, and it must exist somewhere, that is, in some being.

To common sense Scripture adds its voice. It predicates being of God. It ascribes power to him. It ascribes being to things—he created them and set them on their feet, and they abide. He made man, as to his body, out of dust—he endowed him with power. The distinction runs through all, and is inevitable. Nor is it a conjecture. It is knowledge. Either we know that there is a kind of being that thinks and wills and feels, and another kind of being that is extended and solid and related to place, or we know nothing. We know that in

and by these beings power is made known as theirs *de facto* or as theirs secondarily. Of the first kind power is inherent and original. When it is not in action it may be spontaneously put in action. Of the second kind it cannot be original. The essential properties are extension, spacial relations. These cannot be thought away. They constitute the base of resistance which must necessarily arise if impingement take place. To this essence power cannot be ascribed, but it is pervaded by an invested power. The power that made it could not perpetuate it and divest it of extension and spacial relations. He could take from it gravitation, affinity, vitality, and leave its essence untouched. These are modes with which he invests it; they are put in it, but are distinct from it. Iron is a substance. If magnetized it is the substance iron with its common investment of powers plus magnetism. The iron may be without the magnetism, and the magnetic influence subtracted without affecting the integrity of the metal. No vagrant power outside or independent of a body has ever been found. God always puts *fulcra* under material forces—always puts spirit under spiritual powers. If there is no thing without enshrinement of power it is because he has made nothing in vain, but has endowed all things with the power necessary to their end.

If we are asked to define substance, we answer we cannot define it except by enumerating the modes in which it affects us, or except as defining how we are affected by it; but though this definition is a definition which denotes action, and so power, it also asserts the reality and difference of the interacting beings. Whether we think of either power or substance, the one implies the other. The definition deals with what is done or may be done, but it includes the doer. If the doer did not act it would still exist as capable of action. That it has to act in order to manifest itself to us does not imply that it does



not exist in inertia, or might not, but only this: that for us to be able to detect its existence it must act on us.

When power is exerted, or acts, either it acts in order to a definitive end or it does not. If it does not act to a definitive end it is purposeless, aimless, and the end reached must be such as a purposeless action would be likely to effect; if to a definitive end, the end must be such as a purpose would set up, and the purpose set up indicates a being who sets it up; that is, a purposing being. Either it acts necessarily or freely. If necessarily, the necessity must be in the power itself, that is, the power must be such that it cannot exist without acting as it does; or the power must be such that it freely determines what its activity shall be. The first supposition invests each mind with an independent constitution which determines it fatalistically, so that whatever the action, it is purposeless and inevitable—things, including all changes, are exactly as they are by necessity and without purpose.

If the power act to an end it must act from choice or freedom. In that case that which acts might not act, or might act differently. If each monad be a power, this freedom must characterize all of the monads, and each monad could independently choose its own action or end. There would then be as many ends as there are monads, and unity of purpose could not appear. Unity in the effect of so many factors, that is, in the result of their action, could only be reached by supposing a common purpose; but this supposes a unity underlying the multifarious powers, or that all the monads are one in source, or at least that the source of the combined movement is one. There is one who freely acts in all the millionfold forms to one end. But this brings us to God as the one actor. There is then nothing but God, and we have pantheism. It is impossible to admit either of these theories. The latter is true with the modification which will appear further on.

The first supposition is full of manifold impossibilities. It is the supposition that each monad—and it supposes an infinite number, or a number corresponding to points in the cosmos—acts necessarily as it does, either from its own constitution or from its environments. The first objection I name is, it supposes an eternity of activity productive of change in the monads themselves upon themselves; but this is impossible. Change cannot be eternal. All change is temporary; whatever is the sum of changes is temporary, that is, has a time limit. This is so of necessity, and is intuitively seen to be so. The theory, therefore, is impossible. We must reach the changeless before or when we reach the eternal. But if now we say the monads pre-exist before all change or action on their part, then we withdraw the hypothesis that they act necessarily, and we bring on the embarrassment of accounting for the beginning of their activity. Were they eternally inactive powers? How did they begin acting?

But if they could be supposed to begin action, which we see deserts the predicate of their eternal and necessary activity, the difficulty is not diminished. They are individualized monads—independent or at least separate centers. Active power supposes unity of purpose. Each acts from itself, and is acted on by another without its consent. There are as many independent actions and actors wholly without concert or agreement as there are monads. Not one of them acts for any purpose; not one of them purposes an end; none of them can act or be acted on except in a uniform way; they cannot extend or diminish their power of activity in any way. Thus they are an aimless, purposeless, countless host, filling immensity, each pushing its way and being pushed by other aimless agitators—a seething sea, like drops of the ocean, driven—driven from without—driven from within—driven forward and backward, up and down, together and asunder. Is it possible to the mind of man to conceive such a mob to



account for the universe? Would it not be more reasonable to suppose that the stones of St. Peter's, by some aimless chance, built the structure? Must we suppose an architect and builders acting in concert in that case? Are the needs less here? Which is the more reasonable to suppose—that uncounted millions of atoms blindly built the universe, each atom purposelessly going to its own place and all conceiving a common end, or to suppose that a master mind, having an end in view, subordinated these millions to its use? The one case supposes an impossibility, the other finds a factor working out a plan precisely analogous to all that we know of cause and effect by our consciousness.

Once more. The theory that matter is the sole cosmic factor has to account for the existence not merely of physical harmonies great and small, which we have seen it is utterly unable to do, but it has also the still more difficult task—to account for the *de facto* existence of mind. The theory discards mind as eternal. It starts with mind non-existent. It hypothecates the organized cosmos without mind. It declares that mind was not in the constructing factor; that what in it seems to be design was not design; that there was no being that possessed mind. But mind now exists. There is such a factor. Whence did it come? It could not come uncaused. What is the cause which this theory is compelled to assign? It can assign nothing but matter, which it declares has no mental quality. Are we then to believe that that which has not mind evolved mind? How could it evolve that which it did not possess—that which has no analogy to it? No analogy either of substance or modes of activity? Are we to suppose that atoms of phosphorus have the power to evolve thought? to project a Bacon, a Newton? Can any body find in the alleged cause any thing adequate to the effect? And must rational beings be asked to believe so monstrous a supposition? It is said the brain secretes

thought. Is thought a material thing? Has it body and parts that it may be divided, weighed in a scale, or be seen by the eye? Has mind a form, is it composite? Was the brain, this secreter of thought, itself an accident? And is the whole realm of mind the accident of an accident? But if the brain is an accident, and if it secretes design—for it is admitted that design is apparent in the operations of men—how comes it that what is significant of design in us is exactly like that which was not significant of design before us? That is, it is conceded that we do design—form plans—forecast ends—bring them about of will; but things precisely analogous, only infinitely more complete, appear in the workings of nature throughout without design! Now if in our case we know there is pre-plan, on what principle do we deny it in the case of nature? If we know that to make a telescope requires plan, so that the thing would be impossible without plan, how is it that we can predicate the making of an eye, which greatly surpasses it in every respect, without plan? What proof have we in the first place of plan that we do not have in the second? And whence came this power to plan which we consciously possess? To undertake to account for thought without a thinker, the power of intellection without mind, is precisely the same as to attempt to account for effect without cause. We have said that thought is not matter, that it should be secreted by matter. We now therefore say that mind which thinks is not material. Materiality cannot secrete immateriality—cannot be factor of that which is metaphysical. The cause assigned to such an effect is no cause—the thing expressed is not in the expressor. All powers and expressions of mind are metaphysical, non-material, precedent and independent of materiality. Intellection, as understanding, memory, reason, imagination; as love, joy hope; as will, choice, determination, in all the forms in which it is expressed, is metaphysical—the expression of non-material

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being ; is not subject to material tests, cannot be ascertained by material laws or conditions, and as non-material is shown to be eternal. Matter cannot account for it. To suppose it a product of matter is to hypothecate without reason and against reason. Every thing that characterizes it demonstrates that it is eternal, and itself the factor of all that is. It underlies matter as cause, but matter does not underlie it as cause.

The question of the origin of this vast, almost infinite array of life has been recently opened anew, and it has been and is asserted that the accepted and old-fashioned notion that it is a product of divine power must be abandoned, and its cause must be found in the blind operations of mere matter and force, the one eternal and only substance! Evolution is the catch-word of the hour. But this relates more especially to the manner in which the *vis vitæ* works in varying its organic effects. Many advocates of evolution ascribe the original life-force to creation. Some, however, hold to spontaneous generation.

The long extract following, with quotation points, it is proper I should say is taken from a former publication of the author's, and will be found more at full in his Lectures in the Ingham Course.

“It is asserted by McCosh, and other not less eminent defenders of the Bible, that if science should establish the theory of evolution it would not in the least conflict with the inspired text. Some even suppose that the text strongly hints the idea. It must be admitted that the language employed is very remarkable.

“‘And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind.’ Gen. i, 11, 12. ‘And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl

that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.' Gen. i, 20-22. 'And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.' Gen. i, 24, 25. This is the entire of what is said on the subject of the introduction of life upon the earth, except the particular account of the creation of man. Any after-references to the subject are such as simply allude to, or reiterate, the fact that God is the absolute creator of life in its various forms. Now, it is a remarkable fact that in this account the two things distinctly stated are, that God commanded life into being in a certain order of time, and in all the varieties of kind in which it is found to exist, indicating also the law of its propagation; but no statement is made as to how he fashioned the diverse organisms—whether he made each organism by a several creative act, or evolved them all, in their diverse kinds, from a primitive seed of life, which he made to contain them. The sum of the statement is, that he commanded the unliving elements of the earth and the sea to bring forth the *diverse kinds*, and his command was a creative fiat. The diverse kinds were contained in the fiat; but how, is not said.

“That each several species was the product of a distinct creative act we do not find reason to doubt; but the text is not shut up absolutely to this hypothesis. ‘Suppose it proved,’ says Dr. McCosh, ‘that there is such a thing as spontaneous generation; would religion thereby be overthrown, either in its evidences, its doctrines, or its precepts? I have doubts if it would. The great body of thinkers in ancient times—even those most inclined to theism—seem to have believed that lower creatures sprang out of the dust of the earth, without the need of a previous germ.



Some of the profoundest theologians and ablest defenders of religion in the early Church were believers in the doctrine of spontaneous generation; which may be consistently held in modern times by believers in natural and revealed religion.' 'Plants and animals,' he goes on to say, 'are now formed out of germs; or, if you can show it to be so, out of wisely endowed and carefully prepared matter. But how are they propagated? is the next question. By special acts of creation, or by development? I do not know that religion, natural or revealed, has any interest in holding by any particular view on the subject, any more than it has in maintaining any special theory as to the formation of strata of stone in the earth's surface. It is now admitted that Christians may hold, in perfect consistency with religion and Genesis, that certain layers of rocks were formed, not at once by a fiat of God, but mediately by water and fire, as the agents of God. And are they not at liberty to hold always, if evidence be produced, that higher plants have been developed from lower, and higher brutes from lower, according to certain laws of descent, known or unknown, working in favorable circumstances? There is nothing irreligious in the idea of development, properly understood.'\* It would not appall our faith if it should be discovered that all the forms of life below man could be traced to a spontaneous generation from the unliving monads, and that from unity they were developed into diversity; given, that the spontaneous movement, from its inception to its ultimatum, emanated from and was guided by the divine factor.

"The origin of life is a subject which has interested the wisest and most thoughtful men, from the earliest ages. There have always been two, perhaps three, schools of thinkers in relation to it: materialists, who have accounted for it as either inherent in, or the product of, matter by evolution; theists, who have believed it to be the immediate product of the gods; with, perhaps, an intermediate school of pantheists who blended the two. The doctrines which are just now awakening so wide attention—almost panic—are not new; in one phase or another they date back to Anaximander, or the elder atomists. Several times they have

\* "Christianity and Positivism," pp. 36-38.

invaded and disturbed Christian thought. Lamarck propounded them with great confidence in the last century; and less than half a century ago, within the memory of the present generation, they were reproduced with marvelous brilliancy by an anonymous author under the style of 'The Vestiges of Creation,' a work not less widely read at the time, and producing a scarcely less profound agitation, than the books of Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Tyndall, and others to-day. The wave passed by and left no ripple-marks. Professor Huxley now, with, it may be, more learning and many new facts—evidence of the progress of the times in which we live—renews the combat with brilliant promise, and is greeted with pæans of victory before the ink is dry upon his pages. He has discovered the origin of life; the ages-old problem has finally reached a scientific solution! It is a bold venture!

“What is his solution? ‘The Physical Basis of Life,’ is the style of the essay in which he develops fully the theory which had been propounded, in part, in his discussion of Views of Prof. Huxley stated. ‘The Origin of Species,’ and other writings. The title suggests the idea of the treatise. He seeks, and professes to have found, the basis of life in matter, or, as his thesis requires, a composition of matter which underlies and originates life. In the unity of the composite substance he finds the unity of all life, as in the composition he finds the cause of all life; one invariable cause of one identical effect, manifesting itself in a variety of forms. He gives to the substance the name ‘protoplasm,’ or ‘matter of life.’ It is important to be remembered, especially as we shall not always find him consistent with himself, that the conditions of the problem are, not that he find the plasm, or matrix, in which life is cast, but that he find the origin of that which takes form in the mold. He advances not a step toward the origin of life by discovering the components of the matter in which it invariably makes its home, if it were possible to do that. It is requisite that he should show, further, that the plasm, by virtue of its composition, is living, or that it becomes life; the protoplasm must be not simply the home of life, but it must originate, or in substance be, the occupant of the home; or the question remains,



Whence the occupant? Precisely what Professor Huxley professes to do is, to identify life and protoplasm; to demonstrate that life is not something added to protoplasm, but is a component part.

"This appears in many paragraphs of his writings, but in none more explicitly than the following:

"'It will be observed that the existence of the matter of life depends on the pre-existence of certain compounds; namely, carbonic acid, water, and ammonia. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. They are related to the protoplasm of the plant, as the protoplasm of the plant is to that of the animal. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of these, carbon and oxygen unite, in certain proportions and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water, nitrogen and hydrogen give rise to ammonia. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together, under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life.'

"This sentence is pregnant of significance. It is true that when he declares that protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life he introduces the qualifying phrase, 'under certain conditions;' which might relieve him of the imputation of identifying protoplasm with life, or life with the matter of protoplasm; but what follows commits him inextricably. Says he :

"'I see no break in this series of steps in molecular complication, and I am unable to understand why the language which is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used of any of the others. We think fit to call different kinds of matter carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and to speak of the various powers and activities of these substances as the properties of the matter of which they are composed. When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in a certain proportion, and the electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water equal in weight to the sum of their weights

appears in their place. There is not the slightest parity between the passive and active powers of the water and those of the oxygen and hydrogen, which have given rise to it. At 32° Fahrenheit, and far below that temperature, oxygen and hydrogen are elastic, gaseous bodies, whose particles tend to rush away from one another with great force. Water, at the same temperature, is a strong though brittle solid, whose particles tend to cohere into definite geometrical shapes, and sometimes build up frosty imitations of the most complex forms of vegetable foliage.'

"Attend closely to the following sentence :

" 'Nevertheless, we call these, and many other strange phenomena, the properties of water; and we do not hesitate to believe that, in some way or another, they result from the properties of the component elements of the water.'

"Nothing can be more obvious than that Huxley means to be understood as holding that, even as the compound body, water, has nothing in it apart from the oxygen and hydrogen components; that as the combination of these two gives rise to all the peculiar qualities of the resultant, without the addition of any thing else ; so the compound substance, resultant from the union of unliving water, ammonia, and carbonic acid, derives all its qualities, life included, from the combination ; the life is not something apart from the component elements, but is of them, and but waits for the union for its manifestation. That that is precisely his meaning, the thesis, to account for the origin of life, requires, and his further statement still more expressly declares:

" 'We do not assume that a something called "aquosity," entered into, and took possession of, the oxide of hydrogen as soon as it was formed, and then guided the aqueous particles to their places in the facets of the crystal or among the leaflets of the hoar-frost. On the contrary, we live in hope and in the faith that, by the advance of molecular physics, we shall, by and by, be able to see our way as clearly from the constituents of water to the properties of water as we are now able to deduce the operations of a watch from the form of its parts and the manner in which they are put together.'



“Note the words following :

“ ‘Is the case in any way changed when carbonic acid, water, and ammonia disappear, and in their place, under the influence of pre-existing living protoplasm, an equivalent weight of the matter of life makes its appearance?

“ ‘It is true that there is no sort of parity between the properties of the components and the properties of the resultant, but neither was there in the case of the water. It is also true that what I have spoken of as the influence of pre-existing living matter is something quite unintelligible; but does any body quite comprehend the *modus operandi* of an electric spark, which traverses a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen?’

“Nothing could be more obvious than all this, and especially in connection with the question which is immediately added :

“ ‘What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no representative, or correlative, in the not-living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has “vitality” than “aquosity?” . . .

“ ‘If scientific language is to possess a definite and constant signification whenever it is employed, it seems to me that we are logically bound to apply to the protoplasm, or physical basis of life, the same conceptions as those which are held to be legitimate elsewhere. If the phenomena exhibited by water are its properties, so are those presented by protoplasm, living or dead, its properties.

“ ‘If the properties of water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its component molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of its molecules.

“ ‘But I bid you beware that, in accepting these conclusions, you are placing your feet on the first rung of a ladder which, in most people’s estimation, is the reverse of Jacob’s, and leads to the antipodes of heaven. It may seem a small thing to admit that the dull vital actions of a fungus, or a foraminifer, are the

properties of their protoplasm, and are the direct results of the nature of the matter of which they are composed.'

"Here we are told, in direct terms, that the vital action is a property of protoplasmic matter. And now follows the most remarkable and the most important sentence in the treatise:

" 'But if, as I have endeavored to prove to you, their protoplasm is essentially identical with, and most readily converted into, that of any animal, I can discover no logical halting-place between the admission that such is the case and the further concession that all vital action may, with equal propriety, be said to be the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm which displays it. And, if so, it must be true in the same sense and to the same extent that the thoughts to which I am now giving utterance, and your thoughts regarding them, are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of other vital phenomena.'\*

"This language, if terms have any meaning, convicts its author of teaching that all vital phenomena, mental as well as physical, sensation as well as respiration, thought as well as digestion—all vital phenomena, from the contraction of a nerve to the highest flight of imagination or profoundest intuition of reason—are but the result of the molecular forces of protoplasm which displays them.

"Tyndall, a name not less potent than either of the two distinguished masters already quoted, is, if possible, more bold. 'Supposing then,' he says, 'the molecules of the human body, instead of replacing others and thus renewing a pre-existing form, to be gathered first-hand from nature, and put together in the same relative position which they occupy in the body; that they have the self-same forces and distribution of forces, the self-same motions and distribution of motions—would this organized concourse of molecules stand before us as a sentient, thinking being? There seems no valid reason to believe that they would not. Or, supposing a planet came from the sun, and was set spinning round its axis and revolving

\* "The Physical Basis of Life:" "Lay Sermons," pp. 135-138, Appleton's edition.



round the sun at a distance from him equal to that of our earth, would one of the consequences of its refrigeration be the development of organic forms? I lean to the affirmative. Structural forces are certainly in the mass, whether or not these forces reach to the extent of forming a plant or an animal. In an amorphous drop of water lie latent all the marvels of crystalline force; and who will set limits to the possible play of molecules in a cooling planet? If these statements startle it is because matter has been defined and maligned by philosophers and theologians, who were equally unaware that it is, at the bottom, essentially mystical and transcendental.\*

“Stebbing, one of the admiring adherents of the school, thus states his interpretation of the theory:

“‘The problem upon which many thoughts and speculations of science are for the moment converging is the origin of life. Statements of There are some who believe that, under certain chem-  
Mr. Stebbing on molecular life. ical conditions, living creatures are continually coming into existence, ungenerated by any living parent; born, as it were, without birth; acquiring an animated existence, with powers of motion, feeding, and reproduction, from substances previously wanting in one or all of the capacities—such creatures, in short, as, if asked for their parentage, would but answer each for itself, My father was an atom and my mother a molecule. It should be remembered that the little animals, supposed to arise in the manner described, first became visible, if at all, as the tiniest objects that the microscope can detect. But whether there is or is not, in these days, a continual coming into existence of these infinitesimal pigmies, they are just such productions as the theory of development would suppose to have arisen originally, constituting the first outburst of life upon the globe, ancestral to the noblest forms of animated nature now extant, progenitors in an unbroken line of man himself.’†

“We have quoted thus extensively in our desire to do perfect justice by the eminent names whose opinions we combat, and that our readers may know the grounds upon which we interpret

\* “Fragments of Science,” article “Vitality,” p. 441.

† “Essay on Darwinism,” p. 94.

their theories; and especially because we shall soon find them taking back their own postulates and repudiating their own conclusions.

“For a moment, before we advance to the rebuttal, we desire to present, free from all gloss, and nakedly, what we have found to be their teaching.

“The basis of life is protoplasm. All the phenomena of life are resultants of protoplasm. All thoughts and feelings, as well as motions—all forms of activity, moral and mental, as well as physical—are properties of protoplasm; that is, of carbonic acid, ammonia, and water, chemically combined. Carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, apart, are lifeless bodies, subject to the common law of gravitation. Lying inert and dead in the common mass of matter, they enter into a copartnership, and go walking and flying, exhibiting all the phenomena of life. They were, when separate, involuntary and impassive and unintelligent; united, they think and will and feel. One parcel of carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, is cunning, shy, deceptive; another, dull, stupid, idiotic. One parcel, timid, hesitating, cowardly; another, bold, fearless, brave. One parcel, selfish, sinister, knavish; another, disinterested, magnanimous, cosmopolitan. One parcel, the slave of lust, of appetite, of passion, given to rapine, cruelty, and war; another yields to the sway of the ideas of the right, the beautiful, the true, and gives himself to the arts of peace and deeds of charity and love. One parcel loves song, and becomes a Handel, a Mozart, a Haydn; another is enamored of poetry, turns into a Homer, and writes the Iliad; into a Shakespeare, and composes the immortal tragedies; into a Milton, and creates the dream of heaven and hell. And yet another is imbued with the divine fervor of eloquence, and pours Ciceronian, Demosthenian, Websterian thunders down along the ages. Carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, that is all! One set of protoplasms indite laws, philosophies, religions, and set up governments, constitutions, and dynasties; another set invent steamships, printing-presses, electric telegraphs; and yet another hoard of brigand protoplasmic cells let loose the dogs of war, and, rushing with the frenzy of hate, fatten the fields of Marathon, Waterloo,



Gettysburg, and Sedan, with their carbonic acid, water, and ammonia—protoplasmic dust!

“Of this marvelous thesis, we are bold to say, you will search in vain not only through all the pages of these eminent men, but no less fruitlessly through all science and over the entire field of nature, for a particle of proof. Neither experiment nor observation has ever been able to point to a single instance of the origin of life from the mere union of carbonic acid, ammonia, and water. It is an assumption without the shadow of proof, and an assumption beset with the most trenchant difficulties that ever confronted any hypothesis.

“The entire of what is known of life is, that it is a force which never, under any chemical or other conditions of matter, comes into existence or manifestation in unliving matter, except as it is propagated by living matter. Dead matter, organic or inorganic, has not now, and so far as the proof extends never did have power, under any conditions, to originate it; or, if so, the fact has never been made known to man, and rests upon no other foundation than unwarranted conjecture. The proof is positive that it cannot be so; it is demonstrable that the hypothesis is false.\* Thought is the topmost phenomenon of being—mentality. It as certainly antedates all cosmical wonders, from the primitive monad upward, as it pre-dates, in the inventor's brain, the mechanism he creates. ‘The physical basis’ is too slender to support the superstructure. Protoplasm is a high compound, set apart and divinely designated to an honorable use; the palace of life, nothing more. The transcendental king comes to his palace and throne, beautifully and wondrously built up of the dead carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, from afar, and sets light in its windows more lucent than diamonds, and makes all its telegraphic nerves dance and thrill with ecstasies of feeling and thought. But he was not born here; he is the bridegroom, coming with a shining train to his waiting bride; his entrance wakes music and life in all the halls and along the corridors of his beautiful home. . . .

“‘In seeking for the origin of protoplasm, we must eventually

\* For an exhaustive view of spontaneous generation, see Mivart and Figuier.

turn to the vegetable world. The fluid containing carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, which offers such a Barmecide Huxley on vegetable life. feast to the animal, is a table richly spread to multitudes of plants; and, with a due supply of only such materials, many a plant will not only maintain itself in vigor, but grow and multiply until it has increased a million-fold, or a million million-fold, the quantity of protoplasm which it originally possessed; in this way building up the matter of life to an indefinite extent from the common matter of the universe. Thus, the animal can only raise the complex substance of dead protoplasm to the higher power, as one may say, of living protoplasm; while the plant can raise the less complex substances—carbonic acid, water, and ammonia—to the same stage of living protoplasm, if not to the same level.\*

“The plant, then, a living being, is factor of protoplasm; so protoplasm, in place of originating life, is elaborated only by life. To the same effect are these words, taken from another work by the same writer:

“‘The horse makes up its wastes by feeding; and its food is grass or oats, or perhaps other vegetable products. Therefore, in the long run, the source of all this complex machinery lies in the vegetable kingdom. But where does the grass, or oats, or any other plant, obtain its nourishing, food-producing material? At first it is a little seed, which soon begins to draw into itself from the earth and the surrounding air matters which, in themselves, contain no vital properties whatever; it absorbs into its own substance water, an inorganic body; it draws into its substance carbonic acid, an inorganic matter; and ammonia, another inorganic matter, found in the air; and then, by some wonderful chemical process, the details of which the chemists do not yet understand, though they are near foreshadowing them, it (the living seed) combines them into one substance which is known as ‘proteine,’ a complex compound of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, which alone possesses the property of manifesting vitality, and permanently supporting animal life. So that you see that the waste products of the animal economy, the effete

“The Physical Basis of Life:” “Lay Sermons,” p. 134, Appleton’s edition.



materials which are continually being thrown off by all living beings in the form of inorganic matters, are constantly replaced by supplies of the necessary repairing and rebuilding materials drawn from the plants; which, in their turn, manufacture them, so to speak, by a mysterious combination of those same inorganic materials. Thus we come to the conclusion, strange at first sight, that the matter constituting the living world is identical with that which forms the inorganic world.\*

“‘Notwithstanding all the fundamental resemblances which exist between the powers of the protoplasm in plants and in animals, they present a striking difference in the fact that plants can manufacture fresh protoplasm out of mineral compounds; whereas animals are obliged to procure it ready-made, and hence, in the long run, depend upon plants. Upon what condition this difference in the power of the two great divisions of the world of life depends, nothing is at present known.’†

“Finally, Mr. Huxley says of these teachings of his:

“‘I should not wonder if gross and brutal materialism were the mildest phrase applied to them in certain quarters. And, most undoubtedly, the terms of the propositions are distinctly materialistic. Nevertheless, two things are certain: the one, that I hold the statements to be substantially true; the other that I, individually, am no materialist, but, on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error.

“‘This union of materialistic terminology with the repudiation of materialistic philosophy I share with some of the most thoughtful men with whom I am acquainted. And when I first undertook to deliver the present discourse, it appeared to me to be a fitting opportunity to explain how such a union is not only consistent with, but necessitated by, sound logic. I purposed to lead you through the territory of vital phenomena to the materialistic slough in which you find yourselves now plunged, and then to point out to you the sole path by which, in my judgment, extrication is possible.’‡

“This is very remarkable language, as disclosing the fact that,

\* Huxley, “Origin of Species,” pp. 15–17.

† “Physical Basis of Life:” “Lay Sermons,” p. 126.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

after all, Huxley does not believe that he accounts for life without a metaphysical cause. He employs materialistic language, but only for convenience of terminology, while he has a reserved metaphysical sense; he plunges us into the slough of materialism by its use, but tells us in the end it is only a trick of logic, in which he, personally, has no faith at all; indeed, knows to be misleading and false, but from which the only escape is, to continue to employ the misleading terms.

“‘If we find,’ he says, ‘that the ascertainment of the order of nature is facilitated by using one terminology or one set of symbols rather than another, it is our clear duty to use the former; and no harm can accrue so long as we bear in mind that we are dealing merely with terms and symbols. In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter; matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of matter; each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred; for it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, and suggests inquiry into the nature of those physical conditions or concomitants of thought which are more or less accessible to us, and a knowledge of which may, in future, help us to exercise the same kind of control over the world of thought as we already possess in respect of the material world; whereas the alternative, or spiritualistic, terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion of ideas.

“‘Thus there can be little doubt that the further science advances, the more extensively and consistently will all the phenomena of nature be represented by materialistic formulæ and symbols.

“‘But the man of science who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by materialism, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician who should mistake the  $x$ ’s and  $y$ ’s with which he works his problems for real entities—and with this further disadvantage as compared with



the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic materialism may paralyze the energies and destroy the beauty of a life.\*

“The question comes back with all its original difficulty, therefore, as is here confessed: Whence did the vegetable world get its original protoplasm—the matter of life in which it started as a factor of protoplasm? As living, it is able to extract the nutriment of its life, by a chemistry peculiar to itself, from inorganic substances, to make its protoplasm; but this is no account of its origin, but only of the mode of its sustentation. It in turn becomes transmuted into the tissues of the living animal; but the fact that it becomes nutriment to the animal life does not account for the origin of that which it nourishes. The substance of all which is, that there is matter without life and matter with life, the only differentiation being life; the one dead protoplasm, the other living protoplasm. Whence the life is remains unexplained by science, and has no solution except that, like matter in which it dwells, it was created—not evolved from unliving forces.

“If, then, all should be granted that is claimed as known by these savants, what disquietude ought it give to our faith? None at all. What warrant does it give for their boast that life is a phenomenon, evolved from the forces of unliving matter? None at all. This appears, and it is no great addition to former knowledge: there is a composition of matter which is the basis of life, as being a form of matter in which life manifests itself: let it be called protoplasm, the name is harmless. This protoplasm is formed from unliving matter; its chemical constituents are water, ammonia, carbonic acid; it is the same in fungus and man, or nearly so; the plant derives it from the unliving elements, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon; the animal takes it from the plant; when plant or animal dies, the protoplasm returns to unliving dust; each vegetable elaborates its own protoplasm, and never that of some other vegetable; each seed has a chemistry of its own; each animal, in turn, devours the protoplasmic plant or some other protoplasmic animal, and restores its own wastes or propagates its own protoplasm. That is all,

\* “Physical Basis of Life:” “Lay Sermons,” pp. 145, 146.

and it is not new. How these living beings got their first protoplasmic capital, or how the chemically prepared proteine got its indwelling life, does not appear at all; the solution is not touched, and, we hesitate not to say, never can be until we go behind matter and find its cause in the only cause—ultimate, spontaneous will. It is a quantity—life is—alien from and unknown to matter; no chemistry detects it; no microscope discovers its advent. Chemically and atomically, the protoplasm in which it shrines itself is precisely the same before and after its advent. It comes from abroad, *ab extra*, and seizes a protoplasmic cell, and from it builds itself a body—it may be this or that—but each seed or ovum its own body. This is acknowledged by both Darwin and Huxley, and is contradicted by no fact as yet known to any scientist. Here, then, we rest as to the origin of life, in transcendental cause. The force of the argument is, confessedly, with theism; all the phenomena of life emanate from an extra-material fountain; wherever found, in rudimental cell or archangel, it acknowledges one fatherhood; and with every tongue of its million million mouths proclaims the Godhead of its source.\*

“Sir William Thomson, President of ‘the British Association for the Advancement of Science,’ in his late inaugural, reflected the very latest phase of scientific thought on the subject; and his words are of so much value that we give them a place here :

“‘A very ancient speculation, still clung to by many naturalists—so much so that I have a choice of modern terms to quote in expressing it—supposes that under meteorological conditions very different from the present, dead matter may have run together or crystallized or fermented into “germs of life” or “organic cells” or “protoplasm.” But science brings a vast mass of inductive evidence against this hypothesis of spontaneous generation, as you have heard from my predecessor in the president’s chair.† Careful enough scrutiny has, in every case up to the present day, discovered life as antecedent to life. Dead matter

\* See Stirling’s “As Regards Protoplasm;” and McCosh’s “Positivism,” pp. 24, 25, 26.

† Professor Huxley, 1870.



cannot become living without coming under the influence of matter previously alive. This seems to me as sure a teaching of science as the law of gravitation. I utterly repudiate, as opposed to all philosophical uniformitarianism, the assumption of "different meteorological condition"—that is to say, somewhat different vicissitudes of temperature, pressure, moisture, gaseous atmosphere—to produce or to permit that to take place, by force or motion of dead matter alone, which is a direct contravention of what seems to us biological law. I am prepared for the answer, "Our code of biological law is an expression of our ignorance as well as of our knowledge." And I say, Yes; search for spontaneous generation out of inorganic materials. Let any one not satisfied with the purely negative testimony, of which we have now so much against it, throw himself into the inquiry. Such investigations as those of Pasteur, Pouchet, and Bastian are among the most interesting and momentous in the whole range of natural history; and their results, whether positive or negative, must richly reward the most careful and laborious experimenting. I confessed to being deeply impressed by the evidence put before us by Professor Huxley; and I am ready to adopt, as an article of scientific faith, true through all space and through all time, that life proceeds from life, and from nothing but life.\*

\* In the inaugural address here referred to, after an immense array of facts and experiments, *all* pointing in the same direction, Professor Huxley concedes that "the *evidence*, direct and indirect, in favor of biogenesis ['life from life, and from nothing but life'] for *all known forms of life*, must be admitted to be of great weight." But that is no reason why the great *inductive philosopher* should abandon his *theory*! He proceeds: "But though I cannot express this conviction of mine too strongly, I must carefully guard myself against the supposition that I intend to suggest that no such thing as abiogenesis [spontaneous generation] has ever taken place in the past, or will take place in the future. . . . If it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time to the still more remote period when the earth was passing through physical and chemical conditions which it can no more see again than a man can recall his infancy, *I should expect to be a witness of the evolution of living protoplasm from not living matter*. . . . That is the expectation to which analogical reasoning leads me; but I beg you once more to recollect that I *have no right* to call my opinion any thing but an *act of philosophic faith*."—"Spontaneous Generation;" "Lay Sermons," pp. 364-366.

“‘I feel profoundly convinced that the argument of design has been greatly too much lost sight of in recent zoological speculations. Reaction against the frivolities of teleology, such as are to be found not rarely in the notes of the learned commentators on Paley’s Natural Theology, has, I believe, had a temporary effect in turning attention from the solid and irrefragable argument so well put forward in that excellent old book. But overwhelmingly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie all around us; and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend on one ever-acting Creator and Ruler.’”\*

“How life diversifies its manifestation is the special subject to the elucidation of which Darwin devotes himself. Starting with the concession that life is transcendental or metaphysical in its source, he confines himself to the subject of its evolutions in matter; more especially he seeks to show that, and how, all organic forms have arisen by the sole agency of this factor. The idea, as we have already seen, is not original to him. It has cropped out many times and in many places along the ages. He has the merit of giving it the most elaborate expression and impressive defense it has yet received. It takes his name, not so much because it is his, as that he is its most eminent expounder.

“His theory, in brief, is, that all the *organized living* forms, now or at any past time peopling the earth, were evolved from a simple primitive mass of living matter. This substance, impregnated of life, was the most rudimental possible. It was disseminated over the whole surface of the earth. Each infinitesimal part was a factor, containing in itself, potentially, all possible organisms; and from these atomic centers, in fact, all organisms have emanated.

“He thus states it: ‘There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on, according to the fixed law of gravity, from

\* “Ingham Lectures:” “Origin of Life.”



so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.'\* At the time of this utterance, Darwin had not reached the real point of departure for his theory. He evidently saw it dimly, but hesitated. He had traced the beginning of life to a few forms—primitive, created organisms; he saw the foreshadowing of a possible unity; but the venture was too bold. Later, all uncertainty seems to have disappeared, and the few forms were surrendered, and one only remained. The final utterance is in a note, supplemental to the treatise, and in these words: 'I should infer, therefore, that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form into which life was first breathed by the Creator.'

"It is fair to say, that among the numerous expounders of this hypothesis there is not perfect harmony along the entire line of its assumptions, reasonings, and conclusions. At bottom, there are at least three fundamentally distinct schools: one of which is sheerly materialistic; another, semi-materialistic; the third, theistic, and, with a liberal construction, Christian—all agreeing in the general theory of evolutionism.

"The first school knows only of matter. It finds it existing, with its inherent constituent forces, among which is life. From the co-action of the forces, it evolves the entire cosmos; the life-force coming in as the last factor, and acting from the others as a fulcrum.

"The theory knows no such being as a creator, and no such idea as creation. It is baldly *atheistic*. That one organism, or what seems to be one system of related organisms, exists rather than another, is the result of no purpose resident anywhere, but the accident, merely, of blind forces, which act from a necessity internal to themselves.

"This has been shown to be not simply the height of unreason, but absolutely unthinkable and impossible. The attempt to unify substance by locating intelligence in matter does not relieve the difficulty. For the characteristic of the newly supposed force is, that it is a force which acts not from

\* "Origin of Species," chap. xiv, *in fine*.

necessity, but intelligently; that is, from a perception of ends to be reached, and in order to the perceived ends; therefore, spontaneously. Now, this new will-factor must be supposed to be primitive, and always masterful, in the substance of which it is integral; subordinating other forces to its ends; or, otherwise, resultant of the action of the more ancient forces. If the former case be supposed, then we have a spontaneous worker originating the cosmos; which is the theistic idea, and the very thing denied by the theory under consideration. If the latter, then we have the double difficulty of accounting for the order or adaptation of means to ends, which preceded the advent of the factor, by which alone the adaptation could exist; and, what is more serious, we have the difficulty of supposing a cause which, as to the effect, is no cause, since that which is not intelligent cannot be cause to intelligence; and, what is yet more serious still, we have the difficulty of supposing that all the intelligence in the universe—that which organized all order and that which we are conscious we possess ourselves—came out of non-intelligence, sheer and utter; and, yet still more, we are beset with the necessity of denying action from will, or spontaneity, against our consciousness of voluntary activity.

“What I would call the second school of evolutionists must be ranked as semi-materialistic. It differs fundamentally from the school just described in that it holds that both matter and life are created: matter, as a substance possessing definite forces; life, as an extraordinary and superadded force. But the life force thus lodged by a new creative fiat in matter was not primitively placed in definite and discrete organisms, such as it afterward appeared in; but was at first placed in mere formless protoplasm, or particles of matter, from which, as so many innumerable centers, it unintelligently elaborated diversified forms for itself. Thus, the life-force was theistic in its origin, but atheistic in its evolutions. God placed it in formless matter, as a power to elaborate forms, but left it to itself to work out such forms as might come from the blind operation of an unguided force; so that the actual result of all existing organisms is expressive of the action of no final, intelligent will-factor. This is certainly the

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hypothesis of Darwin, and indicates the ground of the charge made against him by one class of his critics, of undisguised atheism; at the same time that another class of his admirers pronounce him a devout theist. In fact, as tried by his scientific writings, he is both and neither.

“The third school of evolutionists—horrified by the gross materialism of the first, and unsatisfied with the equivocalness of the second, and yet fascinated by the glittering generalizations of both, and confused by the array of indubitable facts which seem to support their conclusions—attempts a consistent theistic hypothesis; a theory of evolutionism which, at the same time that it meets the demands of science, is uncontradicted by revelation.

“They assert the direct agency of final cause, both in the origin and method of matter, and all the evolutions of its contained forces. Every phenomenon of being is traced to natural law, but all natural law has its home and forth-putting in God. The grand structure of the universe was evolved and fashioned to precisely what it is, both as to the vast masses of inanimate matter and each of the innumerable myriads of living forms, by the necessary evolution of natural forces; but these forces, each and all alike, were and are simply the fixed methods in which the divine factor carries out his plan. He is the ultimate worker, but forever conceals himself behind these visible sub-agents. He created the primitive monads, and shrined in them certain definite forces which tended, as to themselves, to necessary evolution along predetermined lines, ultimating in a foreseen perfectly adjusted cosmos. Among the forces thus set at work, but appearing later in the plan, when the atmospheric, climatic, and electrical conditions were suitably adjusted, he introduced by a final creative fiat the new transcendental force called life—transcendental, metaphysical, mystical—as not included in the original forces constituent of matter. This new factor—clothing itself in matter, as the electric force robes itself in iron mail when it rushes from hemisphere to hemisphere of the globe, but more spiritual than its magnetic kinsman—was endowed with a potency peculiar to itself, and commissioned to

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perform manifold mysterious functions; among which were these: It had the power of self-perpetuation, translation, and indefinite increase; it could pass out of the particles of its original investiture into other particles where it was not, but which, by the alchemy of its contact, became at once impregnated; it could also organize these impregnated atoms into unity, and thus from infinitesimal centers, by annexation and organization, concentrate and subordinate their aggregate force to one end, thus evolving forms of wondrous beauty and strength and activity, to fill the earth, the air, and the sea. But in all these weird and marvelous functions it was itself the slave of law, imposed by its Creator, and worked along lines preordained by him to the accomplishment of his purpose, and not its own; whatsoever it did it did for him, and by him; it was, in fact, the infinite creative force and intelligence polarized or concentered in certain atoms of matter, from which it manifested itself in all possible forms of life. This is the theory of some evolutionists who are both devout theists and believers in revelation. They see no contradiction in this view to the statements of the Bible. We are not entirely sure that there is any necessary conflict. It is, certainly, a wonderfully brilliant and beautiful conception. Its boldness fascinates us. It appears to lessen the mystery of the phenomena of life, and to find favor in many of the facts connected therewith; but, after all, we are convinced that it is a speculation of which the utmost that can be said is, that the Creator might conceivably have laid the foundation of life in this way. The vanity which attempts to dogmatize it as science is only equaled by the vanity which asserts that it certainly could not be. We neither reject nor accept it, but accord to it hearty admiration as an ingenious speculation on a point which must forever be clothed in mystery—the *modus operandi* of the creative act. Neither its truthfulness nor falsity is of consequence to our Christian faith; and as neither can be ascertained, we are content to leave it undisputed and unaccepted.

“The second theory is that which we propose to discuss, and which we reject as utterly at variance with all known facts. This thesis is, that life in its most primitive form appeared, by a cre-

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ative fiat, in minute particles of matter, each particle being an egg or seed (so far we have no controversy with it—it may have been so); that these quickened seeds or infinitesimal cells had a tendency to increase and grow into indefinite organisms; and that from them, as so many centers, life's tree grew to its topmost flower, man; all the diverse organisms growing from the same primitive root, by almost imperceptible variations, until they reached their utmost difference. Specific organisms were not contained in specific seeds; but each quickened atom contained potentially all possible organisms—was the seed of whatever type might happen to result from its accidental evolution; and that the development has been as it has been implies nothing of special provision or endowment or direction in the several life-centers. Nevertheless, there was, in fact, for some reason or by a strange accident, a seeming method in the simultaneous movements of the blind factors.

“We are left to infer the actual progress, but not without hints to guide us. It is probable that it was thus: At the first essay the cell-factors, with marvelous unanimity, evolved the minutest and most rudimental fungus—a kind of mildew of vegetation—microscopic mushrooms, toad-stools, and lichens, over the shallow pools and marshy surfaces of the earth. These, by slow process, transformed themselves into mosses, liverworts, and various kinds of algæ. In due time, and by force of persistent effort, these grew into the endless variety of those ancient cryptogams, the great flowerless ferns of the coal period, from whose primeval forests were corded away the carbon which furnishes our homes and workshops with the thermal agents necessary to our modern civilization. Then followed flowering and fruit-bearing shrubs and trees and plants, by easy and natural transformation, in the abundance and diversity in which they have flourished along the millenniads even to this day.

“At some point along the infinite ages the animal variety mysteriously appeared. Whether it was a transformed plant, or fruit of some ancient tree, or exalted diatom, or evolution of a primitive cell-factor, science has not yet been able to find out with entire certainty; but in either case its first form was the most rudi-

mental and microscopic possible. Whatever its origin, it immediately displayed marked difference from its congeners of the vegetable variety; not a difference of form alone, but of fundamental law of life. The vegetable cell-factors set up life on a modest scale, and extracted their humble fare from the unsavory particles of water, carbonic acid, and ammonia, in the crude state, building up thus their delicate and luscious tissues into shapely and beautiful forms. The animal pygmies were both more dainty and more ambitious. They scorned the unsavory elements, and went foraging remorselessly on the succulent protoplasmic plants and fatty joints of their less robust kinsmen. When they first appeared they were an exceedingly low, and altogether ungainly, mob of extremely minute but murderous marauders: protozoans they are called by their learned descendants; rhizopods and foraminifers in some of their varieties. In process of time the more prosperous and robust members of this most ancient house, by a succession of intermarriages, established a new order, known in palæontological heraldry as radiates, the old and honorable house of echinoderms, polyps, and acalephs. There were adventurers among these also, who, discontented with the pre-eminence of their family name and hereditary condition, and becoming, by imperceptible changes, extremely unlike their brother zoophytes, ceased to marry with them. These swells, confining their amours among themselves, determined to set up a third house—the well-known molluscan family, which still flourishes in almost infinite varieties, of marvelous beauty and strength, in all the seas of the globe.

“Up to this period our ancient kinsmen were content to dwell in the waters; but the oldest and most primitive branch of all—the vegetable cells—had extended themselves over the lands, spreading out a table of rich and abundant protoplasm along the shores of the rivers and up among the hills and valleys, which some of these rowdy and voracious molluscans perceiving, their cupidity became inflamed, and they determined to make incursions on the inviting pastures of their prosperous and unsuspecting neighbors. These pioneers of land-life soon became a community among themselves, and under the new conditions in which

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they found themselves thought it wise to establish a fourth dynasty—the respectable order of articulata, of which are the illustrious branches trilobites, lobsters, insects, decapods, tetradecapods, entomostracans, and a great variety of descendants, living in respectability, both on land and in the seas, even to our day.

“The infinite ages rolled on. The struggle for existence among these old empires waxed more and more fierce. Great warriors arose under the pressure of the feuds and necessary strife for victory. Internecine wars divided and developed the bands of contending articulates. The result was that, growing by dint of need and effort and improved air and other altered conditions, some of the victorious households became proud, sloughed their articulated shells, made themselves back-bones, and declared a fifth dynasty—vertebrata.

“This was a grand advance in the realm of life. It was, in fact, in its possibilities a new departure; a splendid affair altogether; the founding of a magnificent empire of cosmopolitan life and enterprise. Some individuals of the new order inherited the seafaring propensities of their early ancestors. These betook themselves to the deep, and from them have descended all the piscine, saurian, and reptilian branches of the family, from the smelt to the whale and plesiosaurus. Some were fond of aerial sports, and they grew wings for themselves and propagated ornithological varieties, from the humming-bird to the eagle. Other some neither cared to fly nor yet to swim: they feared things that are high, and they were troubled with a malformation of the respiratory organ which made it difficult for them to remain long in the water; they betook themselves to the woods and turned themselves into mammals, from the mouse to man. Thus it all came about; and this is the simple story of how we all got to be. Topsy explained it all in a single sentence: ‘I ’spects I grewed.’

“This is the genealogy which Darwin and the evolutionists of all schools furnish us. It must be confessed that it is not flattering to our pride; that, as a matter of fact, it requires the surrender of time-honored prejudices, of boasted titles, and heraldic

emblazonry ; and, more than all these, the surrender of the pre-eminent distinction of a differentiated spiritual and immortal life. Is there need for the sacrifice ? Has science traced our pedigree to the spore of the ' polliwog ' so certainly that we are absolutely shut up to the fact ; or are we only mocked, insulted, and traduced by the effrontery of base and scurrilous nescience ?

"What are the facts from which Darwin deduces these strange conclusions ? If the theory is really scientific it rests on no uncertain data ; it is not wanting in proof. Science wastes no time in stammering and muttering of conjectures and possibilities ; that is the method of doubt, not of knowledge. Its sanctions are imperative. It proudly points to the facts, and enforces faith.

"What are the facts upon which it is demanded that we accept the conclusion that our most primitive ancestor was a polliwog ? our most modern progenitor an ape ?—our genealogical line including all the intermediate species between these odious extremes ? Has he discovered the family record, and traced the flower of humanity to this ancient root ? Has he discovered, by experiment or authentic observation anywhere, that it is so ? The facts alleged to support the thesis are these : First, he posits the well-known fact that there is a tendency in the offspring of all living beings to depart from an exact resemblance to their progenitors. This he styles ' the law of variability of species.' He asserts, and it is not disputed, that any offspring may vary, in any conceivable direction, in a minute degree from its parent, and, by consequence, that all the descendants of any progenitor will, and do, differ minutely among themselves. This position is sustained by a brilliant array of exceedingly interesting illustrations. It is established beyond the possibility of dispute. It is fairly a fact of science ; but his arguments were wholly unnecessary, for nobody ever doubted it. He gives rich interest to the subject, and introduces many new facts, but he furnishes no data for new conclusions.

"His next position in logical order is, that where the offspring is numerous and the ratio of increase great, a struggle for existence must immediately ensue, in which many must perish. This, as his first position, is perfectly obvious, and is never



questioned. The point, it has long been known, was early reached in the history of developing life, where but the millionth seed could find a foot-hold for existence on the soil that gave it birth. The prodigality of life, in all its forms, and especially the lowest, has been a theme for poets and moralists from immemorial ages. The earth is a greedy mother, devouring most of her children as soon as they are laid upon her bosom; or perhaps it is better to say, she has a passion for maternity, and her fecund womb is more prolific than her means for sustenance; her matrix larger than her breasts; her mouths more numerous than her pap. Where few can survive and the million must perish without gaining a permanent hold on life, it becomes a question which will have the fairest chance of success, and which must probably succumb. Only the successful can establish dynasties. This gives rise to what Darwin names his third law, or, what is the third in logical order, the law of "natural selection," called by Herbert Spencer, more happily, "survival of the fittest;" which means, simply, that certain facts of nature determine which of her offspring shall survive and which perish. Selection seems to imply intelligence, deliberation, comparison, and election; natural selection, if this were the meaning, would imply that nature, which is another name for matter and its phenomena as used by these authors, is intelligent, and works to rational lines. This is not their meaning. By selection is not meant intelligently choosing, but only this—that the nature of the case determines that seeds of life will thrive in suitable conditions, and perish in unfavorable conditions; that the strong will have a better chance than the weak; that the probabilities of permanence to a given seed will be according to the ratio of its inherent vigor and the favorableness of the circumstances in which it is found to exist, and *vice versa*. Darwin has many curious remarks on the subject of sexual selection, which he treats as a branch of natural selection; of the amours of plants and of microscopic insects, monads indeed; with the courtships, coquetry, and embraces of birds and beasts; the fastidiousness of their tastes as to color, form, and motion; and the strange arts by which they conduct their wooing and reach

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their winning—which are either mere imaginings, or indicate that he has consumed a great deal of time and been extremely minute in his observations. We are quite willing to accept all his facts, and therefore need raise no questions on this branch of his elaborate researches. It suffices that nature, in one way and another, determines which of her offspring shall survive in the struggle for existence, and which shall come to grief or extinction. The best conditioned varieties gain the ascendancy, and the earth becomes full of their children, who inherit their victorious qualities; and so, on the whole, the tendency is upward. Let it be so; what then?

“The answer is obvious, and it expresses Darwin's fourth law, namely, that, where divergence or variation is perpetual, it only requires time to reach the utmost extreme of difference possible. Given infinite ages, the polliwog, by a series of minute changes in each successive generation, will ultimately reach the form of man, or, possibly, in some remote future, a type so transcendently superior to the lordly human that our unborn descendants will redden as deeply with shame and scorn at the imputation of Adamic kinship as we do at the supposition of ancestral unity with the toads and lizards of the long-vanished past. To these laws Darwin adds a number of facts, which he finds supporting his conclusion.

“First. He names what he calls atavism, or reversion. He means by this the appearance, occasionally, in every family, of an individual who reproduces a remote ancestor in typical form, and whose extreme unlikeness to the present generation marks the progress of the change which has been imperceptibly going on.

“Second. Rudimental structure, or the appearance in the lower forms of rudimental members, which, in process of time, might develop into the perfectly formed corresponding members of developed species; or, in some instances, precisely the reverse: rudiments of what were once perfect members, but which, by reason of altered circumstances and disuse, lapsed into mere rudiments; the fact, in both cases, showing the marvelous power of the organism to advance or retreat, and take upon itself extreme modifications.



“Third. Embryonic phenomena, which prove that the primary embryonic condition of all living beings is identical; and that the embryonic changes are so similar, that at any given period all creatures have a precise resemblance; from which it is inferred that any embryonic being might, under favorable or unfavorable circumstances, develop upward or downward into any living form.

“Fourth. General resemblances among all orders, as they appear in living species, showing a closely articulated chain of fundamentally similar links, consecutively differentiated by almost imperceptible diversities; so that, beginning at the inferior extreme, we are enabled to see how, by a slight departure, each successive modification arose, until the superior extreme was reached.

“Fifth. The fact that is now made certain by geological research, as revealed in the rocky strata of the earth, that most anciently the crudest and lowest typical forms alone existed; and that the actual order of the appearance of life has been that of an ascending scale from the beginning until now.

“These are the supposed laws and ground-facts upon which the theory is assumed securely to rest. It must be admitted that they not only have the appearance of great plausibility, but that they give the hypothesis the semblance of solidity and strength in a very high degree. It is not to be wondered at, that to many minds the fascinating dream seems to be demonstrated reality; that, yielding themselves to what appears to be irresistible argument, they account resistance and hesitation in others the result of blind prejudice or willful ignorance.

“The theory stands upon this high vantage-ground, that its facts are indisputably substantially as posited, and they appear to go directly to the conclusion.

“Why are we not convinced? The assault upon hereditary opinions is so far effective that the demand is fully made out that we attend to the case and put in an answer, or allow judgment to be entered up against us by default.

“We have already stated that of the first two of these positions there can be no dispute; they rise above mere conjecture

into the region of assured certainty. The third is probably true. Species are not confined to one variety. They have wide margins of considerable possible and actual difference. From the same primitive root-stock, it is safe to infer, have proceeded many quite unressembling but fundamentally-ressembling varieties. Individual peculiarities propagated, and peculiarities created by circumstances, have been perpetuated along wide and far-extended lines, and become, in some instances, so great a departure from the stock pattern as almost to obliterate the genealogy. The human species is an example, but not by any means the strongest.

“It is in the fourth predicate that we find the fatal fallacy which breaks the chain in the midst, namely, where divergence is perpetual it only requires time to reach the utmost variation possible. Hence, given infinite time—which means no more than geological time, which is practically infinite—the divergence might, nay, certainly would, reach from the polliwog to man; one minute change following another, such as we observe taking place, would ultimately traverse the whole distance and reach the end. This looks like a statement which expresses a necessary truth; but a little examination will suffice to show that it contains a fundamental fallacy. The variation in the individuals of a species from the stock-pattern is not one which carries them further and further away from the stock-pattern into fundamentally new types, which is the assumption here, but it is variation of a fundamentally-permanent pattern. The law of disresemblance among living beings of the same stock is not that of the disresemblance of beings of diverse stocks. The change or variation perpetuated through infinite ages is variation within a circle, not along a line. This is a most important fact; so trenchant that, if it be a fact, it is absolutely fatal to the whole hypothesis of evolutionism. All the elaborate and learned dissertations that have been written on the subject dash into foam and spray upon this rock.

“That it is a fact, we allege is in positive proof, in that not a single instance has been found, in the entire history of life, of the offspring of one stock-pattern taking upon it the form of a

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fundamentally different type. Geology declares unequivocally, as is the testimony of all the masters in that science, that it knows of no such event in all the ages of life. Numerous attempts have been set on foot by means of artificial selection, breed-crossing, change of condition, and all other possible artifices, to divert nature from her established order, but utterly without success. Minute variations have been produced, but no fundamental departure has been attained, either *per saltum* or by long and tedious processes. Some species, as man, dog, horse, pigeon, have shown remarkable facility of variation, capacity to take on new and marked peculiarities, which come to comparative permanence under changes of condition, place, habit, food, and matters of this kind; but they have never been known to become something else than man, dog, horse, pigeon. Neither accident nor methodical effort has developed a new species, so far as has become known to man.

“In some instances two neighboring species of close general resemblance have mated, and progeny has been the result; the offspring taking on some resemblances to each of the progenitors. But in every such case the hybrid has been infertile; so that, even when the stock-patterns of life have run so close together as to be almost identical, it has been impossible to break over the fixed bounds. This is admitted by Darwin, and, indeed, can be disputed by none.

“All known facts thus, we positively aver, stand solidly against the hypothesis. How, it will be asked, does Darwin reply to this damaging allegation? In the easiest manner possible, by manufacturing another assumption, namely, that the confessed absence of proof is not because there is no proof; not because the case is not as supposed; but because, in the first place, we have not lived long enough to note the changes which have taken place in infinite ages; and, in the second place, the geological record has only been discovered in scraps and fragments. If we could but find a witness of sufficiently broad experience, or an unbroken record of the facts, we should find them supporting his hypothesis. And yet further, that the absence of positive proof is not the absence of proof; that though it be

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admitted as true that no instance is known of a translation of species, yet it must be allowed that such remarkable variations do often take place as to make it probable. What are the cases? Darwin devotes many pages to this particular point, and it may be presumed that he brings the most forcible facts known for its maintenance. He has himself, in a brief period, by crossing the breeds of pigeons, produced new varieties, with shorter beaks, gayer plumage, and a few more feathers in the tail; therefore he infers, that if he could carry on the process for a great number of ages he could certainly turn a pigeon into a man; and as the variability of sheep has been shown to be fully as great as that of pigeons, the argument is just as clear that a Southdown might, nay, certainly would, in an endless succession of generations, become bimanous, erect of posture, rational, and employ the tailor to make his clothes; and as florists have been able to variegate roses and geraniums, both as to bloom and fragrance, there is reason to believe that a time might come, far along the eternities, when they would compose oratorios, wear silks and satins, and take their protoplasm with knives and forks.

“The argument from resemblance of structure is considered of great value by Darwin. He thus puts it in his ‘Descent of Man :’

“‘The homological construction of the whole frame in the members of the same class is intelligible, if we admit their descent from a common progenitor, together with their subsequent adaptation to diversified conditions. On any other view, the similarity of pattern between the hand of a man or monkey, the foot of a horse, the flipper of a seal, the wing of a bat, etc., is utterly inexplicable. It is no scientific explanation to assert that they have all been formed on the same ideal plan. With respect to development, we can clearly understand, on the principle of variations supervening at a rather late embryonic period, and being inherited at a corresponding period, how it is that the embryos of wonderfully different forms should still retain, more or less perfectly, the structure of their common progenitor. No other explanation has ever been given of the marvelous fact that the embryos of man, dog, seal, bat, reptile, etc., can at first hardly

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be distinguished from each other. In order to understand the existence of rudimentary organs, we have only to suppose that a former progenitor possessed the parts in question in a perfect state, and that under changed habits of life they become greatly reduced, either from simple disuse, or through the natural selection of those individuals which were least incumbered with a superfluous part, aided by the other means previously indicated.

“‘Thus, we can understand how it has come to pass that man, and all other vertebrate animals, have been constructed on the same general model, why they pass through the same early stages of development, and why they retain certain rudiments in common. Consequently, we ought frankly to admit their community of descent; to take any other view is to admit that our structure, and that of all animals around us, is a mere snare, laid to entrap our judgment.

“‘The conclusion is greatly strengthened, if we look to the members of the whole animal series, and consider the evidence derived from their affinities or classification, their geographical distribution and geological succession. It is only our natural prejudice, and that arrogance which made our forefathers declare that they were descended from the demi-gods, which lead us to demur to this conclusion. But the time will come, before long, when it will be thought wonderful that naturalists, who were well acquainted with the comparative structure and development of man and other mammals, should have believed that each was the work of a separate act of creation.’

“It is not merely in the physical organism that he traces a minute resemblance between all living beings, from a mushroom to a man; but it is no less striking in what are called the mental and ethical powers. If a giraffe or an alligator is a close physical copy of the Apollo Belvidere, the perfect human type, so the mental resemblances are equally strong. Carlo barks in his sleep; therefore Carlo has the power of imagination; therefore he resembles Milton; therefore some future pup, Newfoundland or terrier, in the infinite ages, may write the ‘Paradise Lost.’ Carlo has a hang-dog look when he is chided; therefore he feels the sentiment of shame; therefore he is a moral being;

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therefore the time will come when his descendants will write books, like Hopkins's 'Law of Love,' build temples, and quarrel on questions in ethics and casuistry. The ape uses a stone to crack the shell of a cocoa-nut; therefore he is an inventor; therefore he will, in ages to come, build steam-ships, railroads, and printing-presses. In a word, every living thing is an incipient man, and has a close physical, mental, and moral resemblance to man, and, in infinite time, will come to the estate of man. Is it absurd? Do not imagine that I misrepresent Darwin when I assert it is precisely his argument, stripped of disguises, and carried to its legitimate end. His position is, that there is a fundamental unity among all things living, and a diversity which, in infinite ages, returns to unity; each living thing containing in itself, incipiently, all the possibilities of every other living thing, and only requiring time and conditions to attain the topmost possibility. A pig, taken miles away from home, will return on a mathematical line; therefore he is an incipient mathematician, knows astronomy, and understands the axiom, 'A straight line is the shortest distance between two points;' and, some milliennads hence, one of his descendants will write the 'Principia,' or project a geometry of the heavens. In on-coming ages the progeny of mice and men, quarrelsome landlord and tenant now, will worship in the same pew, preach over the same pulpit, and give their sons and daughters in wedlock. It is only a question of time.

"We confess that we are not convinced. Certain stock features must characterize all life; as, arrangements for gestation, locomotion, alimentation, sensation, and propagation. To accomplish these ends, amid whatever diversity there must be remote similarity of plan. For locomotion, for instance, the arrangement must be for propulsion either in the air, or in water, or on the solid earth; and for these all diversities must include either wings, fins, sails, legs, or sinuosities, or something of the kind. Is there not variety enough in the kinds, number, and fashion of these, from the gossamer wing of the butterfly to the double-braced pinion of the eagle; from the hair-like leg of the centipede to the mill-post limb of the elephant? Is it a fact that a human hand, the antennæ of a



spider, a bat's wing, and a tiger's claw are so fashioned after one model that I must suppose them originally one, or slur the Architect of the universe with charges of sterility of contrivance?

"The argument from embryonic phenomena is no more convincing. We accept the very questionable facts as posited: most primitively of all, every life, of every species, to all appearance, is identical; in the germ there is no sign of difference. What of it? Why not? Each higher development passes through all the embryonic changes of all lower forms in reaching maturity; is successively polyp, tadpole, fish, bird, quadruped, man. Be it so; what then? Are there not marked differences and invariable peculiarities enough? Who ever heard of an embryo of one species stopping short of its type, or transcending it? Is it so that there is really such a correspondence between the act of a shad in spawning its young, an eagle in incubating and breeding young eaglets, an English rabbit and other animal varieties in propagating their kinds, and a daughter of Eve in giving birth to her human children, that we can see no difference, or at most only a slight modification, which time and circumstances will account for? Allow that the young Adam takes on all known embryonic stages in reaching his superior perfection of organism; that he is, when mature, microcosmic, the embodiment of all types; does that fact show community of root? Where is the proof? To infer it is an instance of hasty generalization, which savors more of presumption than wise induction. No more convincing is the fact that life did certainly begin with the lowest organisms, and progress in an order of eminence till it reached man. And why not? Can any one show a reason why these diverse orders should not exist, or why they should not be introduced in the precise order that has actually obtained? We are not able to see it. Is their presence in the time and place so manifest a blunder that we must find folly in the cause? or is the ever-improving type a reason for dispensing with a creator? Is not progress, climax, the most fitting conception of a great drama? How could the Infinite, who has eternal ages for his evolutions, and immensities of space for the theater of his operations, and immeasurable resources of power and invention with which to

diversify his wonderful cosmos, and no need of haste to the conclusion of his manifold creations—how could he more fittingly proceed to inaugurate, and lead on to its culmination, creation's pomp, than by the adoption of the method actually pursued? Most primitively of all, he laid the foundations of his magnificent temple in the atomic stones, out of which he was to beautify its walls and hang its dome with diamonds. He was in no haste, so he took ages to bring forth the top-stone of the material structure, with shoutings of Grace, Grace, unto it! It was worthy of God as it hung, blazing with the radiance of its thousand suns, above the brow of the ancient night; more worthy yet as it swept in sublime circuits, orb wheeling in concert with lucent orb to the fraction of a moment in the completion of a revolution which light only would trace in millions of years. Then opened the drama of life. Why should not the algæ, humblest of its kind, lead out the floral pomp of endless springs? Why not verdure first fringe the golden streams with banks of moss, and then cover the hills and valleys with the woody fiber of stalwart oaks and cone-bearing pines? Why should not protozoa come forth, with their headless train, and mustering after them, adown the long-drawn ages, fishes of every fin, birds of every plumage, mammals of every spot and form, until—grandest of all, and that for which the rest were made—the Adam should march through opening ranks to his palace and his throne?

“To our conception, there is infinite harmony and beauty in the successive acts from protozoa to the human age. Each lifting of the curtain thrills us with fresh pageants more brilliant than the last. The great Artist, in the unity of his plan, but inexhaustible diversity of the figures, and ever-increasing impressiveness of the growing drama, more and more holds us breathless in expectation of the coming act. When the curtain of the grave drops, is that the end? So say Darwin and all his worshipers. So we should say, had we no light but the feeble flicker of earth-born science. It quenches its torch in the tears and darkness of the grave. So says not faith. With an eye undimmed by death, it pierces the darkness of the tomb, and reveals a realm of more transcendent beauty than the drama of life has yet un-

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folded. Upon its gaze there rise invisible splendors ; and the great God and maker of all walks among his rejoicing children, 'wiping away tears from all faces ; and there is no more death, nor pain, nor sorrow ; for the former things are fled away.'

"After all human efforts, and as the sum total of the results of human endeavor to fathom the mystery of life, we have these facts, and no more : First, that life exists in connection with matter ; second, so far as known, it in no case has appeared in unliving matter except by transmission ; third, it appears, in the first stages of an organism, as a minute germ ; fourth, the germ invariably emanates from an organism previously matured ; fifth, the germ advances by growth and several stages of development to a substantial resemblance to the organism which produced it, and in no case to one substantially different ; sixth, it has appeared on the earth in an order, as to time, of progressive perfection of organic structure and vital power ; finally, while each individual differs from every other of its kind, and is subject to modifications, in some instances in a remarkable degree from the stock pattern, the difference in no case is fundamental. These are the things that are known, and they are also the things that are revealed. What life is, whence it came, and how it arose, no solution has been furnished, though many times attempted, other than that which is given in revelation." \*

We add as apposite to the matter in hand the following citations from eminent scientists :

"It may be considered, then, as determined by the overbalance of physiological authority, that there is a capacity in all species to accommodate themselves, to a certain extent, to a change of external circumstances ; this extent varying greatly according to the species. There may arise thus changes of appearance or structure, and some of these changes are transmissible to the offspring ; but the mutations thus superinduced are governed by constant laws, and confined within certain limits. Individual divergence from the original type is not possible ; and the extreme limit of possible variation must usually be

\* See "Ingham Lectures:" "Origin of Species."

reached in a brief period of time; in short, *species have a real existence in nature*, and a transmutation from one to another does not exist." \*

"It may be sufficient to observe, as others have done, that the capacity of change and of being influenced by external circumstances, such as we really find it in nature, and therefore such as in science we must represent it, is a tendency not to improve but to deteriorate. When species are modified by external causes, they usually degenerate and do not advance. And there is no instance of a species acquiring an entirely new sense, faculty, or organ, in addition to, or in the place of, what it had before.

"Not only, then, is the doctrine of the transmutation of species in itself disproved by the best physiological reasonings, but the additional assumptions which are requisite to enable its advocates to apply it to the explanation of the geological and other phenomena of the earth are altogether gratuitous and fanciful." †

In a later edition he says:

"The hypothesis of the progressive development of species has been urged recently in connection with the physiological tenet of Tiedemann and De Serres, noticed in book xvii, c. vii, sec. 3, namely, that the embryo of the higher forms of animals passes by gradations through those forms which are permanent in inferior animals. Assuming this tenet as exact, it has been maintained that the higher animals which are found in the more recent strata may have been produced by an ulterior development of the lower forms in the embryo state; the circumstances being such as to form such a development. But all the best physiologists agree in declaring that such an extraordinary development of the embryo is inconsistent with physiological possibility. Even if the progression of the embryo in time has a general correspondence with the order of animal forms as more or less perfectly organized (which is true in an extremely incomplete and inexact degree), this correspondence must be considered, not as any indication of causality, but as one of those marks of universal

\* Whewell, "History of Inductive Science," vol. ii, p. 565.

† *Ibid.*, p. 576.  
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analogy and symmetry which are stamped upon every part of creation."\*

Mr. Lyell notices this doctrine of Tiedemann and De Serres, and observes that though nature presents us with cases of animal forms degraded by incomplete development, she offers none of forms exalted by extraordinary development.†

Of the theory of evolution there are some things more that ought to be said before dismissing it from our thought. There are two ways of treating it by the contending camps, which we think alike both unwise and false. It is no uncommon thing for the friends of the theory to speak of it as an accomplished fact—as already having taken its place among the undisputed conclusions of science—only doubted, in Dr. Bowne's expressive phrase, "by belated minds." On the other hand, the opposers of the theory often speak of it as an exploded theory—as wholly void of truth, and as no longer deserving attention. Now, neither of these pretenses is true. It is not made out—some parts of it never can be. The decision is not absolutely against it. The debate is not closed. It has many enthusiastic admirers yet among men of great learning and worthiness. It has most pronounced opposers among men of equal ability and worth. There is something in it, but it evidently falls short of its aim. It has done good. Its fruits, some of them, will abide. But it is too ambitious, and will fail of ever making good its chosen goal, and, failing of that, as a theory it will be left behind. The coming age will call it Mr. Darwin's brilliant dream.

The only interest, in point of fact, that theology has in the question is, that it be not permitted to pass if not true. It only sees evil in it as a fable. There is nothing in the theory itself

\* Whewell, "History of Inductive Science," vol. ii, p. 568.

† "Principles," book iii, c. iv.

that makes against theology, except as error is misleading, and makes against all truth.

Suppose it were established that all life was originally posited in one single original material cell, and that from that primitive germ it had spread itself over the whole world, and organized for itself, by an ever-advancing development or evolution, all the forms in which it has appeared in lengthened eons of geological time ; or add Mr. Huxley's dream to this, that life itself was not posited at all, but in infinite progress of change in brute matter life stuff was produced, and life thus spontaneously emerging has wrought the wonderful history of organic evolution as Darwin has theorized : what then ? Would it necessarily displace God ? That it would be to many minds the fatal lure to the espousal of atheism there can be no doubt, for many minds have a strong natural *penchant* for atheism—a sort of delectable antipathy against the gods, as if it hurt the gods. That it would, on the other hand, perplex other honest minds that have a strong natural leaning to the gods there can be no doubt. But what would be its real significance ? Would it make out the claim of atheism ? Would it be fatal as against Christianity even ? Would it settle it that the universe was not created—that there was no Creator—that there was not that precise form of creation by that precise Creator described by Moses ? Hasty minds in both camps precipitate an affirmative answer. One class sees in the admission, or even admitted possibility of such facts, atheism firmly established, and the worthless gods forever dethroned ; and they send up pæans of victory. Some of the other class draw down the flag and give up all as lost. These are the light-weights in the world of thought. More deliberate minds, that neither fly nor light easily, look around and say to themselves, Well, what now ? If compelled to admit the new facts, they do not undertake the subterfuge of denials,



hoping thereby to cover a defeat. They pause to take their bearings. The new facts, which on first blush appalled them, may turn out to be their strongest allies, as has not unfrequently proved to be the case. All discoveries make for truth, even beyond themselves. In this case the thoughtful theist says: What do these new facts signify? Let us try to answer that question, not implying in the answer that the alleged new facts are either established or rendered even probable, for they are neither.

But if the facts be allowed for the sake of the argument, then we should answer, They do not establish atheism—they do not render it even probable—they do not show even that it is possible. This for the reason that they leave unexplained how the evolution commenced, and still further how it continued along intelligible lines without intelligence, and leave the possible, and as we are compelled to think only rational explanation, that, after all, the facts only indicate the way in which God worked in evolving the cosmos.

The argument would proceed thus: Postulate first, that only can be evolved which is involved. Can the postulate be doubted? Can any thing come out of a subject that is not in it? The supposition is excluded by the law of contradiction. The postulate must stand as a necessary truth. Postulate second, the universe is an evolution, that is, it had a beginning. The theory admits this. The term evolution means just that.

The conclusion necessarily follows, that the grounds of the  
 Conclusion of  
 the argument. universe were in that which evolved it. It is simply another form of stating the maxim: Every effect must have a cause.

Now, among the things evolved are life and mind. Postulate first requires that the power to produce these must have been an involution in the source of the evolution. Thus mind

and life, whatever the method of their production, trace themselves back to the eternal source of the universe.

The actual order of the evolution of the cosmos admitted by all, and especially by the theory under consideration, was first, the production of matter.

Now, it cannot be denied that whatever essence matter is, whatever it can do, whatever power it has, it can have nothing which it did not receive. Nothing can come out of it which was not put in it. Suppose it should be <sup>Matter not self-producing.</sup> admitted that it, by inhering laws and forces, immediately began that series of changes which has actually taken place in the progress of endless ages, culminating in the established and orderly universe as we now find it, would that discovery displace God, or in any respect dis sever his connection with the universe? Would it not, in that event, be as really his creation to its minutest extent as if each atom of change along the entire series to the outcome had been immediately and efficiently caused? Did he in any less degree put into the evolution its law and force because he invested it at first? Was not the law his law, and the power his power, given forth from himself throughout the series? If not, whence did they come? How did the primal matter become possessed of them?

Now, suppose the particular force known in modern scientific terminology as "*vis vitæ*," or life-force, was primarily so invested that when the proper conditions were reached along the line of changes, uncounted millions of years from the beginning, it should appear in its lowest possible expression; and that, as the illimitable ages passed, it should take on, at distant intervals, new forms, appearing in higher and yet higher types, until finally, starting from the rudimental spore, it developed into man: would that discovery displace God? Would it dis sever him from the culminated product in the slightest degree? Would not precisely the same problem remain, Whence



comes the force and whence comes the law of its varying manifestations? And could any other answer be returned than this: The original endowment contained all that matter as such contains; the force and law were in the endowment, and whatever emanates from them emanates from the giver? It is not different from the unfolding of any seed or germ. In the seed is vested a power which works according to a law. The future plant is in the seed, the future animal in the germ cell. It is simply a vested power, which, with its law, traces back to a primitive source. If it should take on a higher type, or exhibit new and enlarged organic quality, it would have to trace it in like manner to the same source. Thus if the fundamental feature of the evolution theory were granted it would make nothing against theism, and would not be irreconcilable to Christian theism.

But while this is true, as we have seen in the preceding discussion, there are no adequate proofs to sustain the theory. The utmost that can justly be claimed for it is, that it is a fascinating possibility, with some circumstances to give it a low degree of plausibility, or one of the conceivably possible ways in which the almighty universe Builder may have proceeded.

But there is a true law of evolution, and, while it is not the law adduced by Darwin, it ought to be admitted that his theory True law of evolution self-development. has, by the discussion which it has elicited, greatly illuminated it. It is also true that Huxley has educated light on the subject of life, if not on the problem of its origin. Out of the inadmissible and impossible predications and implications has arisen, after all, a better understanding. We know more of the conditions of life and the modes of its working, more of the plan of the divine movement, than was ever known before. The subject has been cleared of crude conceptions and absurd and groundless assumptions. Faith in the theistic theory, while not damaged, is greatly improved in

its expression and grounds. A real service, whether intended or not, has doubtless accrued.

What is that true law of evolution? It is this: The essence of the idea of evolution is, that of a subject unfolding itself in a manner of orderly progress, each new phase growing out of, or being an advance upon, that which immediately preceded, by a power or tendency found in the subject itself. The materialistic theory makes the primitive subject-matter and the operative agency of change a blind force driven by necessity, and without purpose or intelligence. This theory, we have seen, is not simply beset with insuperable difficulties, but is absolutely impossible. Nothing is more permanently settled than that the universe cannot be accounted for in this way.

But there is a form of evolutionism that, differing essentially with this, has some resemblance to it, that has no such besetting difficulties, and may probably be proximately the exact truth. Of this theory the primitive subject is spirit, not matter—a purposing agent, not a blind force—a free, personal, intelligent Being, not a purposeless clod. Out of, or by, that eternally existing, infinitely perfect Being the universe is evolved.

The evolution from the primal movement onward is in a closely articulated and eternally purposed order, conformable to the infinite wisdom of the subject by whom it is freely evolved. The connection of the atomic parts of the series, one following the other in an infallible order, and the successor necessitated by its predecessor throughout the entire chain, is as real as if the entire movement were one of absolute necessity; but though it is not so necessary, it is an order imposed by the infinite agent himself upon himself by free self-determination—differing in no respect from that of any intelligent process except in its absolute perfection, and in that the force implicated here is creative as well as ordering.

Development  
orderly and  
under law.



This is the form of evolution which prevails in inorganic nature, and holds sway therein. The laws are called necessary laws because fixed and unvarying, and impossible to be meddled with except by the Founder himself.

There is reason to believe that this is proximately the process by which the inorganic world systems were formed—an evolution from the primary condition of matter by implanted or inherent laws, and working in a necessitated and predetermined manner until the world order was established. These laws still hold, and work and conserve and perpetuate the world systems, and will so hold as long as He who appointed them shall so determine. They are simply modes of his activity. This evolution is the first stage of an eternal or endless movement of a self-determined cause.

The second stage of the evolution is, that by which life, organic existence, and mind are introduced. It will be observed that the order of succession is one of advance, and also one of necessity; that is to say, the first stage, of necessity, preceded the second, and though not causational of it, either directly or indirectly, it was the necessary condition precedent, and was in the direct line of movement toward the end.

It is found as a fact that organic existence began in the lowest forms, and that the temporal order of the movement, through a vast period, has been one of probably exact interdependence and sequence from the lowest to the highest type. This fact seems to favor the idea that each type has arisen out of its immediate predecessor; but of this there is no proof. The evolution has been simply that of a growing worthiness in the orders of life, one probably in some way conditioned on the other, or each advance conditioned on the state of inorganic and organic nature at the time of its introduction; but the entire movement is simply an unfolding of the thought and purpose of the original and only Agent in the whole movement

from the beginning. How closely one type of life is connected with another is not yet determined by any thing that is known. But nothing is more certain than that the cause of all life, and all the types of life, is the infinite Founder of the universe.

It is an undoubted fact that there is discernible a close and invariable law of interdependence in the whole world-system and all the parts of cosmic phenomena—it is a strict unity. There are no parts out of relation and harmony. This fact it is that points to a unitary ground in its primal cause.

Nor is the evolution, probably, yet complete. Perhaps it were better to say it is certain that it has but fairly commenced. Were the materialistic theory true we might be compelled to suppose that the evolution has reached its climax, and that no further advance is to be expected, or, at most, but slight modifications in the higher types. Whether the now apparent fixedness of things, under what seem to be balanced forces and inviolable laws, will continue endlessly, or the system topple over into chaos again to run a new round similar or tangential to the movement which has, unpurposed, reached the present outcome, might be impossible to determine. Not enough is known of the possibilities of matter and force left to mere chance to enable us to forecast the future. But the movement, whether a regress or progress, could scarcely be expected to reach beyond building up and tearing down organic forms. Construction and destruction would, so far as appears, be the termini—the beginning and end of all products of force. Nothing evolved under such a system, as we know it, could be the ground of a still higher progress to itself, however it might be the ground for some new type. The system presents nothing more in prospect for man but to perish and pass away. Where the mind is product of the organism, not as being but simply as phenomena, immortality becomes an impossible conception. The recession of the organism ends all, or reduces all

2



to inorganic and archaic beginnings again. The prospect opened by the system is simply that, at best, of an endless round of the dreary and meaningless routine of terrestrial phenomena.

The true doctrine of evolution, as we understand it, is that, so far from having already in an eternity of change reached its highest possible expression, it has only but commenced. It is not that of brute matter by purposeless changes assuming one phase and then another by mere happening, and finally reaching order and harmony and all the evidence of forethought and purpose, and even producing mind itself, both finite and infinite—certainly an impossible dream—but it is that of a universe evolved from an omnipotent mind. The evolution fills out a scheme of thought which spreads over limitless regions of space and carries up through limitless ages of eternity. It embraces in the sweep of its purpose and realization all physical change and all spiritual growth. On earth its topmost product is man, who conditions all things beneath him. For their completeness of significance toward him all the earthly ages marched. But not alone for any thing he becomes in his habitation of dust, but also and especially for what he is to become when he quits his earthly dwelling-place. This home was fitted for his infancy—the kindergarten of his childhood. Out beyond lie the eternal ages of his manhood growth. The inspired book calls it the sphere of changing “from glory to glory,” which is only another way of saying evolving from one height of character to another more exalted height—one stage of blessedness to a more consummate stage. Every thing in the evolution points to these ultimate culminations as the final cause of all. That part lies hidden from sense, and is but dimly descried by reason, but is abundantly revealed to faith in the holy oracles. This is the lesson which reason reads from the story

of creation and from the book of man, as well as from the book of books.

Science, no less than revelation, points to the time—our human arithmetic will not reach the point—when suns will burn out their fires and the ancient stars drop from the tree of existence—when not a vestige of the present cosmic order will remain to tell the story of its birth and growth, of its waning and decay, of the half eternity of its reign and the sudden catastrophe of its fall, when the old heaven and the old earth will pass away.

A new and improved creation to succeed the present state.

Science has nothing more that it can do; in the overthrow of its data, the laws and regulated forces on which it built, it has reached the confines of its empire, and can go no further. Reason, guided by its unfailing henchman and friend—"the light that shineth in a dark place"—undismayed by the chaos and passing away of all material phenomena, describes "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," rising upon the wreck of the old and former things that have passed away. The great and final evolution has come. The scaffolding of the material cosmos, no longer needed, has tumbled away, and lo! the sapphire walls of the city of the great King and the choral hymn of celestial choristers over the birth of a new creation! Henceforth the triumphal march of immortalized spirits to their eternal thrones.

*The teleological argument.* The teleological argument is that which infers an intelligent and purposing cause from the evidence of design in the cosmos. Like the cosmical argument it is "*a posteriori*"—proceeding from effect to cause—but it differs in that from certain qualities in the effect it deduces corresponding and definitive quality in the cause. It not simply determines that there is a cause of the cosmos, but that the cause is an infinite intelligence. The term explains itself—from the Greek τέλος, end, and λόγος, discourse: a dis-



course on final cause. The term really denotes the science of final causes. Dr. Hodge puts the philosophy of the Argument from design. argument concisely. He says: "By design is intended, 1. The selection of an end to be attained. 2. The choice of suitable means for its attainment. 3. The actual application of those means for the accomplishment of the proposed end." Wherever these three are found there is proof positive of the causational action of intelligent agency. It is, in fact, but a more enlarged statement of the doctrine of cause and effect, namely, that whatever appears in the effect implies a corresponding quality or power in the cause; indeed, that which appears in the effect is not original to it; it has nothing in itself; it is but an objectified expression of what is in the cause. The effect is the cause in translation. Effect tells, to the extent of its contents, what is in the cause—is true exponent of cause. Design demonstrates designer. The generic idea of design is that of a mental act precedent to a causative act. It is purely a mental movement, which is revealed or made known by external movement. To every effect it is primal or starting-point, because all effect ultimately proceeds from mind. This we know by the consciousness of our own causational acts. We first propose and then do. It shows that mind antedates and underlies all movement that is for an end. It shows that the entire of the organized cosmos has its genesis in mind; that spirit is the eternal factor out of which all forms and arrangements of the physical and solid universe arose; that spirit is the eternal real, of which the whole cosmos, in its immeasurable magnificence, is only shadow.

It is instructive to note on what slight indication we become conscious of the presence and agency of the designing factor. It is not simply in intricate and manifold arrangements—works of great skill, ingenious contrivances, curious and useful inventions, such as a steam-engine, printing-press, threshing-ma-

chine (or any of the hundred similar devices), splendid architecture, painting, sculpture, music, creations of fancy, science, philosophy—not in these alone and things like them that we cognize the preplay of thought, design, but we see it in the slightest expression—in the Indian arrow-head or stone knife or ax, in the rude pile of logs or brush thrown together for a night's shelter, in a bent wire or sharpened stick—the simplest as well as most elaborate and magnificent things. Not only do we detect the preplay of mind, we know that its agency was absolutely necessary to the end—that no unintelligent factor ever could have reached it. We know that in the hap-hazard interplay of material particles eternity would be insufficient to produce a rude hoe with which a Cuban slave might cultivate his sugar-field. How many eternities would it require to produce the *Great Eastern*, with its appointments and crew, and send it on its mission of connecting the continents of the world with electric cables! But all these things are but infinitesimals of the skill displayed in the cosmos. The argument may be found in extent in the numerous treatises on natural theology. We cannot burden our pages with their richness. We indulge in a single quotation from Kant (*Crit. Pure Reason*), acknowledging our indebtedness to Dr. Lord for the extract: "The present world opens to us so immense a spectacle of diversity, order, fitness, and beauty, whether we pursue these in the infinity of space or in its unlimited divisions, that even according to the knowledge which our weak reason has been enabled to acquire of the same, all language fails in expression as to so many and great wonders, all number in measuring their power; so that our judgment of the whole must terminate in speechless, but so much the more eloquent, astonishment. Every-where we see a chain of effects and causes, of means and ends, of regularity in origin and disappearances; and since nothing has come of itself into the state in which it is,



it always thus indicates, farther back, another thing as its cause, which renders necessary exactly the same further inquiry ; so that in such a way the great whole must sink into the abyss of nothing, if we do not admit of something existing in itself originally and independently, extended to this great contingent, which maintains it, and, as the cause of its origin, at the same time secures its duration." I extend the extract still further from the same source, taken from Sir W. Thomson's address before the British Association, 1871: "I feel profoundly convinced," he says, "that the argument of design has been greatly too much lost sight of in recent zoological speculations. Overwhelmingly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie all around us ; and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend on one ever-active Creator and Ruler." \*

Let any one reflect for a moment (or rather let him study for a life-time, and, however long, that will be insufficient for the problem) on the magnificence of the sidereal universe, its almost infinite extent, the exact and beautiful perfection of its manifold relations, the precise and unvarying laws which regulate its distributions and movements, its unfailing durability, the power which upholds and guides it, the undiminishing splendor which lights it on its way along the immensities of ages and of space ; then, turning from this bewildering grandeur, let him come back again to his own modest planetary home—but an atom amid the spheres—and let him consider its structure, its economy of day and night, its revolving seasons, their purposes and ends, its distribution of land and water, of soils, moisture, and sunshine, the treasures that are hidden in its bosom, and the atmosphere that fans and

\* Lord's "Christian Theology," pp. 47-49.

purifies its surfaces—its vegetable wonders, from the rock moss to the giants of the Calaveras forest, its fruits, flowers, grains, and succulent plants and roots—all its forms of animal life naked to the eye and reached by the microscope, arrangements for their alimentation, respiration, upbuilding, conservation, locomotion, procreation, enjoyment—the marvels of sensation, the eye for seeing, the ear for hearing, the papillary nerves for tasting, intellection, emotion, volition, the infinitely varied all that renders life possible, that makes it desirable, beauty for the eye, love for the heart, hope for all—let him go Evidence of intelligence in design. over the world and note all its manifold arrangements woven out of sunbeams and atoms of primitive gases, its endless manifestations of skill and forethought of love, and answer to himself, if he is under the necessity of putting a mind factor behind an Indian's arrow-head, a Cuban slave's coarse hoe—can he dispense with His agency in the all-pervading harmony of the almost infinite cosmos? It is not difficult to determine what the answer must be. Behind the universe, in the awful abyss of eternity, dwells the infinite God, of whom and by whom and for whom are all things. Invisible himself, immeasurable in power and skill, creation proclaims him its Author and End.

Dr. Hodge makes some valuable remarks on this subject. He says: "It is, moreover, true that the intelligence indicated in design is not in the thing designed. It must be in an external agent. The mind indicated in a book is not in the book itself, but in the author and printer. The intelligence revealed by a calculating machine, or any similar work of art, is not in the material employed, but in the inventor and artist. Neither is the mind indicated in the structure of the bodies of plants and animals in them, but in Him who made them. And in like manner the mind indicated in the world at large must be in an extra-mundane Being. There is, indeed, this obvious



difference between the works of God and the works of man. In every product of human art dead materials are fashioned and united to accomplish a given end ; but the organized works of nature are animated by a living principle. They are fashioned, as it were, from within outward. In other words, they grow ; they are not constructed. In this respect there is a great difference between a house and a tree or human body. But, nevertheless, in both cases the mind is external to the thing produced, because the end, the thought, is prior to the product. As the thought or idea of a machine must be in the mind of the machinist before the machine is made, so the idea or thought of the eye must be anterior to its formation. ‘It is a simple and pregnant conclusion,’ says Trendelenburg, ‘that so far as design is realized in the world, thought as its ground has preceded it.’ And this thought, he goes on to say, is not dead, as a figure or model, it is connected with will and power. It is therefore in the mind of a person who has the ability and purpose to carry it out. He further says, ‘tiefsinnige Zweckmässigkeit bewustlos und blind,’ cannot be imagined ; that is, a blind and unconscious adaptation of means to an end is inconceivable.

“ As the conviction that design implies an intelligent agent is intuitive and necessary, it is not limited to the narrow sphere of our experience. The argument is not, Every house, ship, telescope, or other instrument or machine we ever saw had an intelligent maker, therefore we may take it for granted that any similar work of art was not formed by chance or by the operation of blind, unconscious forces. The argument rather is, Such is the nature of design, that it of necessity implies an intelligent agent ; and, therefore, wherever or whenever we see evidence of design we are convinced that it is to be referred to the operation of mind. On this ground we are not only authorized but compelled to apply the argument from design far

2

beyond the limits of experience, and to say, It is just as evident that the world had an intelligent Creator as that a book had an author. If a man believe that a book was written by chance or by blind, unconscious force, then, and not otherwise, can he rationally deny the validity of the argument from design in proof of the existence of a personal God." \*

The instances of design in the universe are as numerous as the parts of being; there is not an atom that does not serve an end, and that does not in the end it serves probably indicate a special pre-purpose of creating mind; not a force that does not emanate from creative mind and that is not exerted for an end preconceived. But it is when there is a manifest and ingenious contrivance that we are compelled by the laws of thought to affirm, Here is proof of purpose, demonstration of designing intelligence: as in astronomical arrangements; arrangements of soils, water, atmosphere, light, heat, in proportion and relation for vegetable growth; as in organic arrangements in the plant itself, for its growth, fruitfulness, and propagation; as in the arrangements connected with animal existence, in their organisms throughout, systems for sensation, of nutrimentation, of locomotion, of procreation; the eye for seeing; feet, wings, fins, sinuosities for locomotion, in the air, on the earth, in the water; the mouth for voice and speech and reception of air and food; the stomach for digestion and the lungs for respiration; the blood for building and repairs; talons, beaks, claws, and teeth for protection and use in obtaining aliment; the hand for its cunning work, without which thought itself would be incapable of expression. To know the power of the argument it would be needful to examine every part of organic existence thoroughly, for there is no separate part that is not as much indicative of thought as doors to houses, valves to engines, lenses to telescopes, dial and hands to a watch, blades

\* Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, pp. 216, 217.



to knives, types to books. Read Dr. Paley on the eye, Dr. Bell on the hand, etc.

These are an imperfect selection from a multitude of authors who have treated of general and specific adaptations in nature. But, after all, the learned dissertations of scientific men, valuable as they are in pointing out the exact and marvelously ingenious contrivances of nature's anticipatory arrangements, are not so convincing as what appears to the eye of every observer as he looks out upon the universe and finds every object announcing arrangement, skill, plan, and the all-pervading presence of inscrutable power working with a constancy that never flags or varies from generation to generation. The very perfection of the method tends to mislead the unreflecting into the idea of necessity; but reflection makes manifest only the working of infinite power under the direction of infinite wisdom. The argument is complete. The cosmos is the product of power working to an end—power called into exercise and guided by wisdom; thought original, pre-devising; power subsequent, evolving into reality the antecedent ideal. If any thing can command the inevitable, uneradicable, universal belief of the human mind this truth does.

This appears if we reflect still further on the idea of force. It is impossible to form a philosophy of it that does not lead to this conclusion. It is obvious that in all cases we mean by force that something by which some other thing is, or has been, or might be, or we desire should be, brought about. It always has in it the idea of causation—power working to an end. We mean by power working to an end, that without the agency of which there would be nothing effected—that something that flows forth into effect. As going forth it has a source, as terminating it has an end—that to and for which it flowed forth. The terminal *ad quem* reveals the source *a quo*. Now, if force always

expresses action to an end, and if the end in every case seems to be part of a plan which displays thought, then the evidence is, that the force is exerted by and emanates from the planner. It seems to have no other ground of existence but that it serves his plan—it is his force working out his end. This, we assert, is true of every atom of force in the universe. The proof is, that force in all forms is only a mode of divine activity whereby to secure divine ends. It is not something existing apart, *ab extra*, from the norm factor which he uses, but it has its source *ab intra*. No force, therefore, is strictly a necessary force, but all force in all cases is a mode of divine free activity. What we call natural and necessary forces are only relatively permanent methods of his free action whereby to secure relatively permanent ends. The universe is the free expression of his power.

We close this argument from design with the remark that, if there be a man who can really believe that the organized cosmos is the result of the evolution of unintelligent force, there is nothing that implies greater unreason, and he might with less discredit believe that a certain number of independent and self-subsisting atoms, each acting for itself and without community with the others, first arranged themselves into a font of “nonpareil” types, and then, unguided by an intelligent power, arranged themselves, or could have arranged themselves, in such form as to become Newton’s “Principia,” Bacon’s “Organum,” or Milton’s “Paradise Lost;” that another set prepared the paper, and yet another the ink, power-press, and binding; and still another set combined all that their predecessors had done to perfect the whole into one marvelous product. The mind displayed in the books named, great as it is, is less than is manifested in the creation of the writers themselves, and the physical arrangements displayed in the structure of the volumes not at all comparable to that displayed in the

2



organs of perception and expression with which the authors were endowed. Indeed, it is safe to assert that the theory that cosmical arrangements in inorganic and organic nature are product of mere force of matter without mind, once accepted, makes it impossible for the imagination to conceive any thing that would imply its agency. If there is not proof of mind in cosmical phenomena, and as antecedent to and causational of them, then it is impossible that proof could be furnished of the existence of mind. No other imaginable facts could supply the demonstration. There is no mind, or if there be mind it is impossible to be proved. If final cause is not apparent in the cosmos the phrase has no meaning—describes nothing that is or ever has been known to or conceived by man. The denial involves the denial of all mental phenomena. There is nothing but phenomena of matter. All forms of human language and thought implying such a factor as mind, such things as plan, arrangement, design, causation, are meaningless; in fact, there is no such thing as meaning in any thing. The universe is without meaning—the word meaning is meaningless. But the human mind cannot be reduced to the belief of such abject nescience. The all-pervading apparent design in the cosmos is real. Infinite mind projects itself in material forms—the solid globes are shadows of older thoughts.

“Order,” says Baden Powell, “implies what by analogy we call intelligence; subservience to an observed end implies intelligence foreseeing, which by analogy we call *design*.” Again he says: “Now the bare fact of order and arrangement is on all hands admitted, though commonly most inadequately understood and appreciated. The inference of design, intention, forethought, is something beyond the last-mentioned truth, and not to be confounded with it. This implies intelligent agency or moral causation. Hence, again, we advance to the notion of distinct existence, or what is sometimes called per-

2

sonality ; and thence proceed to ascribe the other divine attributes and perfections as centering in that independent Being." \*

This argument from the order of the universe has received so powerful and lucid a statement from Baden Powell that I quote further :

"The very essence of the whole argument is the invariable preservation of the principle of *order* ; not necessarily such as we can directly recognize, but the universal conviction of the unfailing subordination of every thing to some grand principles of law, however imperfectly apprehended in our partial conceptions, and the successive subordination of such laws to others of still higher generality to an extent transcending our conceptions, and constituting the true chain of universal causation which culminates in the sublime conception of the cosmos.

"To a correct apprehension of the whole argument the one essential requisite is, to have attained complete and satisfactory grasp of this one grand principle of law pervading nature, or rather, constituting the very idea of nature, which forms the vital essence of the whole of inductive science, and the sole assurance of those higher inferences from the inductive study of natural causes which are the indicators of a supreme intelligence and a moral cause.

"The whole of this discussion must stand or fall with the admission of this grand principle.

"If we read a book which it requires much thought and exercise of reason to understand, but which we find discloses more and more truth and reason as we proceed in the study, and contains clearly more than we can at present comprehend, then undeniably we properly say that thought and reason exist in that book irrespectively of our minds, and equally so of

\* "Connection of Natural and Divine Truth," p. 183.



every question as to its author or origin. Such a book confessedly exists, and is ever open to us in the natural world.

“When the astronomer, the physicist, the geologist, or the naturalist notes down a series of observed facts or measured dates, he is not an author expressing his own ideas: he is a mere amanuensis taking down the dictations of nature; his observation-book is the record of the thoughts of *another mind*; he has but set down literally what he himself does not understand, or only very imperfectly.

“That which requires thought and reason to understand must be itself thought and reason. That which mind alone can investigate or express must be itself mind. And if the highest conception attained is but partial, then the mind and reason studied is greater than the mind and reason of the student. If the more it be studied the more vast and complex is the necessary connection in reason disclosed, then the more evident is the vast extent and compass of the intelligence thus partially manifested, and its reality, as existing in the immutably connected order of objects examined independent of the mind of the investigator.

“But considerations of this kind, just and transcendently important as they are in themselves, give us no aid in any inquiry into the *origin* of the order of things thus investigated, or the nature or other attributes of the mind evinced in them.” \*

“A lung,” says Mr. Newman,† “bears a certain relation to the air, a gull to the water, the eye to light, the mind to truth, human hearts to one another; is it gratuitous and puerile to say that these relations imply design? There is no undue specification here, no antagonistic argument, no intrusion of human artifice: we take the things fresh from nature. In say-

\* Taken from “The Theistic Argument,” *Diman*, pp. 115–118.

† “The Soul,” p. 32, *seq.*

ing that lungs *were intended* for breathing and eyes for seeing, we imply an argument from fitness to design, which carries conviction to the overwhelming majority of cultivated as well as uncultivated minds. . . . If such a fact stood alone in the universe, and no other existences *spoke of design*, it would probably remain a mere enigma to us ; but when the whole human world is pervaded by similar instances, not to see a universal mind in nature appears almost a brutal insensibility. . . . Of the physical structure of mind no one pretends to know any thing ; but this does not weaken our conviction that the mind is and was meant to discern truth. Why should any philosopher resist this judgment ? One thing might justify him, namely, if there were strong *a priori* reasons for disbelieving that mind exists any where except in man. But the case is just the reverse. That puny beings who are but of yesterday, and presently disappear, should alone possess that which of all things is highest and most wonderful, is *a priori* exceedingly unpalatable. As Socrates and Cicero pointedly ask, ‘Whence have we picked it up ?’ Its source is not in ourselves ; there must surely be a source beyond us. Thus the tables are turned : we must, *prima facie*, expect to find mind in the universe, acting on some stupendous scale, and of course imperfectly understood by us. Consequently, such fitnesses as meet our view on all sides bring a reasonable conviction that design lies beneath them. To confess this is to confess the doctrine of an intelligent Creator, although we pretend not to understand any thing concerning the mode, stages, or time of creation. Adding now the conclusion from the order of the universe, we have testimony adapted to the cultivated judgment, that there is a boundless, eternal, unchangeable, designing Mind, not without whom this system of things coheres : and this Mind we call God.” \*

\* Jackson’s “Philosophy of Natural Theology,” pp. 78, 79.



The same kind of reasoning that disproves the agency of God and his personal existence disproves all agency and personal existence.

*The moral argument.*—The moral argument for the divine existence is that which is derived from the moral nature of man. It is like those already given *a posteriori* in its form. It deduces the nature of the cause from the character of the effect. It is a modification of the design argument. As that proves final cause—that is, intelligent and purposing agency in the world-ground—this proves a moral nature in the world-ground. If from the law of succession in the mode of the physical cosmos, and if from the manifold evidence of design pervading it, we deduce an eternal designing cause—a personal, intelligent, and volitional agent—the argument now proposed deduces his existence and his moral perfection from the existence and moral nature of the soul.

The soul is a real being, and it is non-material. Yet the soul, or more properly the man, is a being whose existence had a beginning in time. This is an undisputed truth of any individual human soul. The fact is so patent to consciousness, that, so far as I am aware, it has never been disputed by either materialists or spiritualists, materialists admitting that the individual so-called spiritual phenomena falls within time.

Having had a beginning, it must have had a cause or author. The cause must have contained the requisite power to produce the effect. As the effect manifests spiritual qualities—powers of thought, moral sense, will—these must also in some way inhere in the cause, otherwise their origin is unexplained, the effect is without cause.

Constitution of the soul. Constitutional habits and spontaneous tendencies of the soul form an argument for the existence of the moral nature of God. To the intuitive belief which we have seen in another part of this discussion,

it adds other intellections and feelings, purely spontaneous, arising out of the nature of the soul, which are meaningless and inexplicable without him.

“There are two laws or general facts which seem to characterize all the works of nature. By nature is here meant all things out of God. The first of these laws is, that whatever capacities, necessities, or desires exist, or are found in any organism, adequate provision is made to meet and satisfy them all. This is obviously true with regard to the vegetable world. Plants have organs for the selection of the material necessary for their growth and maturity from the soil, organs for the absorption of carbon from the atmosphere, the capacity of being appropriately affected by light and heat, organs of propagation designed for the continuance of each after its kind. All these necessities are met. Soil, atmosphere, light, heat, and water are all provided. The same is no less true with regard to the animal world in all its endless variety of forms. Food, light, heat, air, and water are suited to their several necessities, to their organs, and to their instincts. If they have the appetite of hunger they have organs for the appropriation of their food and for its digestion, the instinct for its selection, and food suited to each is ever at hand. So of all the other necessities of their nature.

“The second law or general fact is, that all these living organisms reach perfection, and fully accomplish the end of their being; that is, they become all they are capable of being. All that belongs to their nature is fully developed. All their capacities are fully exercised, and all their wants fully satisfied.

“These two things are true of every living creature within the compass of human knowledge except man. So far as his body is concerned they are true of him also. His physical necessities are all met by the present circumstances of his being. His body becomes all that it is capable of being in this

2



stage of existence. But these things are not true with regard to his soul, his proper self. *It* has capacities which are not fully developed in this world, and never can be. It has desires, aspirations, and necessities for which the world does not furnish the appropriate objects. It is, therefore, as evidently designed for and adapted to a higher and spiritual state of existence as his body is adapted to the present order of things. The soul of man has, in the first place, intellectual powers capable of indefinite expansion, which in this world can never reach their utmost limit. With these is connected a desire for knowledge which is never satisfied. In the second place, the soul of man has a capacity for happiness which nothing in the world, nor the whole world could it be attained, can by possibility fill. The animal is satisfied. Its capacity for happiness is here fully provided for. In the third place, the soul has aspirations to which nothing in this life corresponds. It longs for fellowship with what is far above itself; what is boundless and eternal. In the fourth place, with all these powers, desires, and aspirations, it is conscious of its weakness, insufficiency, and dependence. It must have an object to worship, to love, to trust; a Being who can satisfy all its necessities, and under whose guardianship it can be safe from those powers of evil to which it knows that it is on all sides and at all times exposed; a Being whose existence and whose relations to itself can explain all the mysteries of its own being and secure its felicity in the future, on which it knows it must soon enter. Just as certainly as hunger in the animal supposes that there is food adapted to still its cravings, so certainly does this craving of the soul suppose that there is some Being in the universe to satisfy its necessities. In both cases the craving is natural, universal, and imperative. It cannot be that man is an exception to the laws above mentioned; that he alone, of all that lives, has capacities, desires, and necessities for which no pro-

vision has been made. God is the correlative of man, in the sense that the existence of such a creature as man necessitates the assumption of such a being as God."\*

Perhaps even deeper and more universal and uneradicable than the intellectual intuition of cause is the moral consciousness of need, of dependence, of responsibility. These attend every moral act. The soul, so soon as it attains maturity, experiences the sense of right and wrong, not simply with regard to external actions, but also with regard to secret thoughts and motives—proposed but not finished deeds. It knows a law, and sees behind the law the Lawgiver. It trembles and quails under the searching of an eye that it feels is beholding it always, in the darkness as in the light. It is conscious that it cannot hide from the awful gaze—to it, "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." We venture that no human soul is without this conscious internal experience among its earliest and most abiding feelings, until obliterated by long courses of abuse. This must be explained. What is it that thus imperates conscience in anticipation? What is it that thus lashes it in retrospection? What is it that glares upon it with an open eye, and makes it writhe with the certainty that all its secrets are known? What is it that sets it to looking forward with trembling and fearful apprehension of judgment and retribution? It is the most superficial and unphilosophical explanation to ascribe these phenomena to education. The cause lies at the very core of our being, and springs unbidden and irrepressibly from the constitution of the mind itself. It knows that that eye is real, that God sees it and will require account of it. God has not left himself without a witness. If he has written his name indelibly on every physical phenomenon in such manner that the intellect must behold him, he has no less certainly spoken to every consciousness, enunciating law in such

\* Hodge's "Systematic Theology," vol. i, pp. 236, 237.



form that the heart must discern him. If his hand is visibly stretched forth in creation his searching eye also sensibly penetrates the heart and conscience. No man escapes it. It pierces through the deepest darkness, and suddenly terrifies the soul with its startling gaze. If there is an eye that beholds, if the trembling spirit feels "thou God seest me," there is also a perpetual voice, now of entreaty, now of command, now of encouragement, now of reproof, now of warning: eye and voice. Who that ever lived has been without these reminders? They are universal and uneradicable. They compel belief. The soul of man, as much as the sidereal heavens, is witness of the being, of the infinite presence and knowledge and holiness, of God.

That which is added by this witness is the proof not simply of the being of God, but proof also of his unappeasable hatred of sin, his love of righteousness, his ultimate purpose to judge men according to their deeds. The attempt to think that possibly these things are not so must unfailingly show the depth and permanence of the conviction that they are. It is not only proof, but it is proof irresistibly convincing in every case when nature is permitted to have its course. It is even doubtful whether it is possible by any methods of abuse or perversion or long-continued and systematic effort to abate it, to emancipate the soul from its convincing power, at least until all sense of right and wrong is obliterated; that is, until the distinctive badges of humanity are destroyed it must dominate the soul.

There is yet another constitutional fact which bears with equal force to the same end. It is that consciousness of the human soul which leads it to hope in God in every extremity, and inevitably brings it to long for his ultimate favor and recognition. Prayer is instinctive. In all hours of peril it springs unbidden to the lip. It is nature's impromptu cry—the weak turning to the strong for help. It may be on the

sea or the desert, engulfed in the flood or wrapped in the flame—no difference what or where the danger, the affrighted soul cries always to some superior though imperfectly apprehended Being for help. It believes that he is near at hand, that he can hear and help it. It has hope in infinite power and love. *In extremis*, when time and earth vanish, whatever its sin and guilt, like a weary, wayward child it stretches forth its imploring hand to its unseen Father. To the bosom of his love it hopes to come. If there is any thing that characterizes humanity this does. Is nature a lie? Does it always and forever lead to delusion and a snare? We cannot suppose it if we would. If the fact of fear of retribution indicates the inexorable justice of God, these promptings of hope, these cries for help, these pleadings for pardon, these unappeasable longings for ultimate shelter in the bosom of infinite love, proclaim not simply that God is, but, deeper still, that he is the necessity of the affections, that he is a loving father. No desire goes beyond him, no craving demands more than him; he is the complement, the completeness of all forever. That the soul of man in its nature, and not simply its existence, demands God as its author and cause is not less certain than that Raphael's matchless Madonna demanded an artist of matchless skill. The soul could no more create its moral constitution than it could create itself. He that made it made its law also. Its existence as Being proclaims a mind as cause, as that which has no mind could not impart mind. Its existence as a moral consciousness—a conscience—necessitates a cause who possesses moral ideas and enforces them.

*Argument from dependence.*—The fact and sense of dependence in man demands explanation. The explanation leads to an independent Being. The outcome is an absolute necessity of thought. It is an impossible thing that there should be any dependent existence

Dependent existence necessarily supposes independent being.



and there be no independent existence. Dependence cannot stand alone. In a pendent chain each link is dependent on the link to which it is attached immediately above it. In the regress there must be some one link on which all the pendent links are dependent. That one link can be dependent on no other. It is independent, and supports all the rest. Remove it and every link drops. This is as nearly an intuition as any thing can be. It is, in fact, but a phase of the intuition that to any effect there must be a cause.

But it is worthy of note that, while the principle involved is an intuitive cognition, the fact of dependence is an indubitable fact, cognized and known by all so soon as any thing is known. But if the principle is true, then to know the fact of dependence is to know the fact of the Independent. In this way independent existence, which is but another name for God, is as nearly an intuition as can be. Like the argument from cause, it is at least of the nature of demonstration.

It is not by the slow and uncertain processes of the logical understanding that we arrive at the fact of dependence. If not an absolute intuition of the reason, the sense of it is a universal and constitutional instinct. The feeling—if not innate, born in us and with us—is the earliest that comes to us and the most uneradicable. Our utter helplessness and need find expression in the first wail of infancy. It attends us, and grows with our growth through every stage and every moment of our subsequent existence. As our intelligence expands and we become acquainted with the facts of being about us and of ourselves, it becomes more and more vivid. Impelled by a necessity we cannot resist, we look away from ourselves for some one on whom to lean. We demand one who is above all, one who commands all; almighty power, almighty wisdom, almighty love. There must be an independent existence, and that independent Being must uphold all dependent existence in the universe.

There is also an instinct of worship in man. He must worship. The object of his worship is he upon whom he feels dependent. The instinct is of the very essence of his nature. He is never found without it. It must be accounted for. If there be One somehow cognized by him as calling forth this passion it is all plain; but if not, what does this instinct mean? The stomach does not crave without an object: does the heart love and worship without an object?

As a dependent being, there is in man the instinct of worship.

Allied to this instinct of worship is the instinct of hope and trust. The soul ever looks beyond itself. In its feeling of dependence it gropes after the Infinite. It seems to see him. It feels after him, if haply it may find him. It turns to him as a hunted creature seeks a refuge. It never loses hope. When all lights are extinguished along the shores of time it discerns dim lights on the distant shores of eternity. This is a fact of humanity. It must be accounted for. If it is true that the soul of man is a child of God, an heir of an infinite Father, it is all plain; but if not, whence this universal norm—this mysterious law?

Then allied to it is the instinct of dread. Mere dread might indeed be explained, as the unknown often excites terror simply as unknown. We are accustomed to the idea of possible danger, and whenever we approach any thing that is not familiar to us the familiar idea of possible danger makes us tremble. Darkness, mystery, strangeness, certain sounds and appearances, excite nervous apprehension—fear. That is all easily explained. But it is not that of which we speak. There is an instinct in the soul—partly a feeling, partly reason—which we call conscience. It affects us strangely. Its phenomena are universal. No soul of man fails to be aware of them. It makes over to us the words right and wrong—ought and ought not. We cannot silence it, though we may

Instinct of dread.



deaden it. It keeps forever discriminating and premonishing. It must be explained. If there is a right and wrong—the ought and the ought not—it is all plain. If there is One to whom we must answer—a Judge who will require it of us—these phenomena are not difficult to explain; but if not, who can solve the riddle? Many attempts at explanation have been essayed; none have been satisfactory.

*Argument from universal belief.*—An argument in favor of divine existence, which has been more or less depended upon, but with varying fortunes, is derived from the universality of the belief. The argument, though having some value, it is probable is more striking and showy than solid; yet, taken with other irrefragable proofs, it has too much worth in it to be passed over without mention. Alone it would be inadequate to support all the demands of the theistic thesis, but, nevertheless, it is not without significance. Its significance is not simply, or even chiefly, in the fact itself, but rather in underlying grounds and principles which give rise to the fact. The fact of a universal belief requires to be accounted for. The easy explanation is, that there are grounds either in the nature of mind itself, or in things under the observation of all, which force the belief. Either of these facts would go far to vindicate the truth of the belief. Any other explanation is difficult to find. The maxim, “*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus, est veritas*” needs qualification. Beliefs as universal as any that have prevailed have been founded in error. Beliefs, as such, whether entertained by one or many or all, in one age or place or in all ages and places, furnish no absolute proof of their validity, though they may give rise to a probability. They prove nothing but their own existence. The question whether they are true must always depend upon something else than the fact of their existence. The same fact, or state

of facts, which led one man to err may lead all men to err, or the error of one at the starting-point of the race history might be propagated in all his descendants. The question when we set forth in pursuit of truth is not, What do men believe? but, Why do men believe, and is the ground of belief adequate? The weeds of error are of easy growth, and their seeds are in the feeble faculties and environments with which we begin the pursuit of truth; they take rapid and deep root in the soil of our depraved mind, and they are tenacious of existence. No reason can be assigned why an error springing in the mind of the first man might not send its roots through all his descendants, or why its baneful seeds might not sow all the acres of the minds of all his progeny. No reason can be assigned why the circumstances which led to an erroneous idea in the case of one mind might not be such as to affect all minds in the same way. That the earth is stationary, and that the sun revolves around it, was a universal belief for ages—an error which arose from a perfectly natural, and what to all seemed an adequate, reason. The same causes led to other but similar errors with regard to the relative magnitudes, distances, and relations of all the celestial bodies. Other errors and groundless superstitions have been as wide as the race.

Though the mind was made for truth, and we must believe will ultimately attain to truth, we must yet remember that the chances for error on any subject are much greater than those for truth, and our ideas are much more likely to be discordant with truth than conformed to it. Truth is one, is exact—possible error is infinite. It is much more easy to stumble into error than to find the truth. The words of our Saviour are applicable here, as they were in the application he made of them, “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way . . . and few there be that find it;” while of error it may be said, “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way . . . and many . . . go in thereat.”

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So that the mere fact of belief is in itself of little value as proof.

The argument from universal belief is not, therefore, when judiciously put, cast into the form of the syllogism, "What is universally believed is true; the existence of God is universally believed, therefore the existence of God is a truth;" nor even in the more conservative form, "What is universally believed is probably true; the existence of God is universally believed, *ergo*, the existence of God is probably true."

Any certainty or probability which accompanies belief must arise from the relations of the thing believed and the mind in which it becomes a belief. These, therefore, Arguments for a divine existence. are the ground of proof. In so far as a universal belief requires proper relations in order to its existence, it points to the fact that there is proof, and is only in that respect of any value in establishing the matter believed. If it can be shown that a belief is universal, because in the circumstances in which men exist and from the nature of the mind itself it becomes a belief, these facts will give it more or less evidential value. That is only saying, If it can be shown to be a belief which has some grounds it may be quoted as evidence, in that it shows there are grounds for it. Being apparently the product of what seems to be proof, it becomes in a sense itself proof; but in the last resort it is not the belief that is proof, and it should only be quoted as such when its grounds are known to be valid, as it can only be supposed to be such when they are supposed to be valid.

Now, if we apply these principles to the case in hand, what is the result? We are seeking to find grounds for the belief in the existence of God for the confirmation or establishment of our own faith, or we are seeking to remove doubts from some other mind. We wish to adduce adequate grounds of belief. Among others our minds come on the statement, Belief in the

existence of God is universal, therefore it must be true. At once, in the alert mind, several mental movements take place. (a) The first movement which spontaneously springs from the reflective reason, it may be, would be this: Is it certain that what every body believes is true? Is it to be received as an intuition, a necessary truth, or a demonstrable truth, or a truth of observation? If he should be compelled to answer in the negative, he might dismiss the alleged reason as no reason, and therefore worthy of no further attention, unless in the examination he found that while a universal belief is not a clearly established or necessary truth, yet it implies probable truth. In that case he would feel called upon to learn what the grounds of probability are. Or, (b) it might start as the first question, Is it certain that the belief is universal? Settling it in the negative, he might dismiss the argument at once as unsound; or he might proceed to inquire into the circumstances under which the exceptions arose, and might, upon these, determine either that the exception establishes the rule or overthrows it.

Suppose now that he finds some people that do not have the belief—individuals, communities, nations. What effect ought that fact to have on the argument? He could not prosecute that question at all without discovering that the mind, by a law of its own, would immediately raise the point, Why is there this dissent from the general belief? or rather, this absence of the common belief? and, Which represents the truth, this one doubt or narrow dissent, or mere defect of faith, or this general, almost universal, concurrent belief? He could not settle it by vote. If he should find the one doubter, or the few doubt-  
Proofs of a divine existence considered.  
 ers, ignorant and vicious in an extraordinary degree, he would probably say these exceptions only prove the rule. All intelligent people believe; those who do not have simply degenerated below the level of men, and their ignorance or



doubt proves nothing. If he should find, on the other hand, that the small portion was made up of thoughtful, well-informed, virtuous men—men of honesty and candor and exemplary wisdom, who have reached their doubt after the most painstaking manner and with extraordinary opportunities, while the mass of believers, though good and of average intelligence, and of equal learning and ability, were yet under the dominion of prejudice or traditions, or bound by interests of one kind or another to the common belief—he might, in that case, find reason to conclude the almost universal belief erroneous, and the few doubters or even disbelievers he might conclude possessed the truth. Thus we find we cannot depend upon the mere point of numbers for the establishment of beliefs. We must go behind that and inquire into the grounds, and they will determine the point at last, whether the few or the many are right. And we must remember that all progress begins with the few; that is, if a general error exist, the discovery of the error begins with one or a few minds, and for a time the truth has the support of an infinitesimal minority against the almost universal majority. It is only thus that truth wins its victories and progress is attained. Meantime the resisting crowd point to the antiquity of their belief and the support it has had in all ages, and the unpopular truth with its meager following is derided and discredited.

Is there, then, no value in this universal belief as proof of divine existence? We answer, As mere belief, No. So far forth as the universality implies reasons which have won the faith of all minds, it implies probable truth; but the reasons themselves are the determining grounds.

Now, what are the alleged reasons which have given rise to the universal belief? What is the answer to the question, How has mankind become possessed of this belief? The answer has been returned, that it must be in one of four ways:

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(*a*) Either it has been handed down as an heirloom from the first age, before men were scattered abroad over the earth, and has had vitality enough to keep alive in all the branches of the scattered family ; or, (*b*) it is a truth which is so concreated in the human mind, or level to the common reason, that every mind must discover it—that is, an intuition ; or, (*c*) it arises as an inevitable conviction in all minds along with some sense-perception which is common to all ; or, (*d*) there is an immediate impartation of it by deity himself to each mind. These seem to be the only alternatives. No fifth method, that I am aware of, has been mentioned, and I am not able to conceive of a fifth. Allow that it became universal in one of these ways, would that fact establish its truth ?

Suppose we assume that the first method accounts for it. The first man, somehow, had the belief and taught it to his children ; would this fact furnish any true ground for believing it—any proof of its truth ? It has been answered, How this faith became general. as we think, without reason, Yes. When we ask on what ground should we believe in a statement of doctrine delivered by Adam, or the primitive man, to his children—this doctrine, for example—what answer can we give ? Observe, it is supposed to be a truth which we have not the power to know ourselves, hence we name as the ground for believing it, in the absence of any other proof, that it is a truth which we have received from the first man. Now the question is, allowing it to be perfectly certain that it did descend from him, What is there in that circumstance that furnishes any more proof of its truth than if it came from some other man ? The answer must be, either, it is because the primitive man must be supposed to have known more than his descendants, or to be better able to know, so that he discovered what we cannot ; or, his circumstances were peculiarly favorable ; or, the truth was supernaturally communicated to him for the race. Now



either of these would be a good reason, but how are we to know that they, either of them or all of them, are true? This is an open question, and all the proof any statement coming from him could furnish on the point must depend on the answer to that question. It will not do to assume either of the three suppositions without proof, since they are not self-verifying.

That Adam had any special endowment, or stood nearer to great truths, is not *prima facie* apparent. It is often asserted, but the reasons for the assertion must be adduced before a theory can be built upon it. It is alleged that he was more favorably situated for the discovery. What is the proof? He had the same earth and sky we have. Had he any thing that we have not? If so, what, and what is the proof? He had, we know, *less* experience, less opportunity for inquiry, less time to mature his thoughts, and distinguish between his knowledges and imaginations. That these were compensated for by special endowments and some unique facts about him, is what is to be shown. The proof to my mind does not appear. Was the truth supernaturally revealed? We believe yes, but our belief is nothing. The question emerges at once, Is there ground for the belief? For the answer to this question we must refer the reader to the discussion of the point whether we have a revelation from God, and whether it began with the first man. If we have such a revelation, the teaching of the revelation on that point becomes evidence. Meantime we attach no value to the personal belief of Adam on the subject of divine existence, more than to that of any of his descendants, and see in the fact that it is universal because imparted by him to his children, no proof whatever of its truth. That must result alone from the manner of his receiving it. The circumstances of the case point strongly to the probability that it was a divine gift. All the evidence which proves there is a God, and that man is responsible to him as a moral subject—and of

both these propositions there is abundant proof—points to the probability, we think to the certainty, that he would and did put himself immediately in communication with his new-made child. He could not, it is reasonable to believe, leave him ignorant for a single day, or leave him to himself to find out by his own ingenuity or instinct the fact of his existence, and of his relation to him, and his rightful authority over him. The immediate wants and duties of the new-made subject, the importance that he should know his law and move forth upon his responsible existence understandingly, the moral and religious nature which we know that he possessed because it has descended to us, make it a reasonable belief that his maker would feel it a duty to reveal himself as the source and authority of his law. The unique circumstances of Adam, and his relation to the religious interests of his descendants, create a reason, which all must feel to be adequate, why he should be favored with peculiar manifestations of the deity to him. It does violence to our moral instincts, our sense of right and justice, as well as benevolence and love, to suppose that no such revelations were made. These considerations may fall short of positive proof, but they cannot fail to furnish the ground of a reasonable presumption which finds its complement of proof in an attested revelation.

Adam's religious opportunities for the knowledge of God equal to those of his descendants.

But the universal belief, while we doubt not it takes its rise in this primitive divine manifestation, does not find its evidential value as proof of divine existence in this fact alone. Whatever importance might attach to the historic fact, there are other grounds which raise it to the dignity of a supreme proof. These are the facts (*a*) that God so appears in his works that all minds are compelled to recognize him. This fact it is that gives root and power to the universal faith. The universal belief knows itself as resting on this ground, and that fact at-



tests its validity. It is not an idiosyncrasy of some minds: it is the inevitable belief of all minds. It is incredible that a belief on such grounds should not be true. The supposition that it is not true implies that there are such evidences that the mind cannot withhold belief, and yet that the belief is false: and the demand is made to relinquish faith which rests on evidence which compels belief in the absence of any counter proof whatever. All men are called upon to believe that to be false which the universal reason declares is supported by the most convincing proof. It is this genesis of the belief in all minds which compels us to accept as true that which is believed. It is incredible that there should be an inevitable and universal mistake on such a point, and irrational to assume a mistake of such a kind without any proof whatever that it is so. If it were a belief which rested upon tradition merely, and if facts had come into light which indicated its error, or if it were a belief which could be shown to rest upon prejudice or passion, or some illusion or mere imagination, it would then have no rational value. It could not be dignified as proof. It might be brushed away as other superstitions and fables have been; but being as it is, the outcome of the whole intellectual and moral nature of man, under all circumstances, in all ages and conditions, it cannot thus be disposed of. But (*b*) again, there is still another ground for the universality of the belief which gives it evidential value. If while the outward eye does not see God he is clearly seen by the eye of reason; seen in all his works; seen by the uncultured and the cultured alike, as plainly as the sun is seen; seen in the marvelous skill and power which overspread creation, so that we can doubt his existence only by repudiating the common and universal reason, or so that we are compelled first to renounce our faculties before we can renounce him—there is still one other fact which compels belief: it is his voice within us—a voice which every man hears—we name it conscience.

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We may deny it, may resist it, may bribe it, may ridicule it, may resort to all possible arts to exterminate it, but it will not down. When we fancy we have got rid of it, it comes again. What manner of discourse does it hold with us? What does it say on this question? What is its universal voice? It tells us there is an eye ever beholding us from the gaze of which we cannot hide. We may try not to believe it, but we do not succeed. We walk the earth, visit distant lands, cross the seas, mingle with all sorts of people, pursue business or pleasure, plunge into dissipation, but the conscious sense of a mysterious presence never deserts us. The thought of death makes us uneasy. It keeps sounding in our souls like an alarm-bell, There is a God who is taking note of all these things. The moral law holds up its stern tablets, and pronounces its authoritative words; we cannot escape the admonitory presence. We know this is so. What does it mean? It means, we are compelled to believe, this: that this inevitable sense which haunts all from the cradle to the grave is true. It is incredible that conscience should be able to make itself so universally heard and felt, that it should be so uneradicable, that we should all and always hear these same voices, and undergo these same profound perturbations, and feel these same apprehensions, and go through life with these same impressions of a mysterious Presence, of an ever-gazing Eye searching us through and through, and there be no truth in it. Beliefs so born in the soul of man are not without some deep ground. They are a testimony to a truth. There is, then, in the universal belief an argument; not indeed in the fact itself, but in the grounds to which our reason is compelled to ascribe it. The belief points to the reason. Not to have it is to be void of the common reason, or is to deny that which the common reason affirms must be true from proofs which somehow are universally perceived.

Man's consciousness of God's existence.



In harmony with this view, Flint has the following judicious remark: "In no form ought the argument from general consent to be regarded as a primary argument. It is an evidence that there are direct evidences—and when kept in this, its proper place, it has no inconsiderable value—but it cannot be urged as a direct and independent argument. This is a most important consideration, which is in danger of being overlooked in the present day." \*

The direct proof of divine existence, which is thus seen to be absolutely overwhelming in itself, and so complete as to coerce the acceptance of right reason, becomes still more irresistible when we reflect on the impossible absurdities of any theory which excludes it. The facts lying within our knowledge are absolutely unmanageable on any other possible supposition, while upon this theory they are each and all entirely plain and consistent. Take the universal consciousness of the sense of the Infinite, issuing in a universal faith in the reality of his being: why should this appear in mind, as mind, if it have no reality? The sense of dependence, the feeling of responsibility, the yearning of desire, and the entire circle of consciousnesses which recognize him as object of worship and love: how are these spontaneities of mind to be explained? The solution is easy if we allow the fact of his being, but inexplicable on the supposition that He is not. The fact that there is a consciousness at all, if we disallow a conscious cause, must be explained. Whence came it? How does it arise? It is here; we know it. How shall we account for it? Shall we call it a fortuity? Will our reason accept the explanation? Is bare and simple unconsciousness an adequate cause? Take the facts of being around us: they are here, we know of them; they must be explained. We have seen how, admitting an eternal cause of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, their presence is satisfac-

\* "Theism," note viii, p. 349.

torily explained, but, denying such a cause, what can we allege? We must cease to be men not to demand a solution, but what shall it be? Shall it be assumed that since they exist they have always existed? We have seen that this is absolutely impossible. We do not simply doubt the explanation—we absolutely know that it is not so. Shall we assume that the so-called matter of it always was, and that the present order is the result of its aimless activities? Can reason accept such an answer? Does it commend itself as even possible? The mass seems to be pervaded with thought and design—its several parts to be related and ingeniously adapted to the ends they serve: can we believe that this is a deception? Is it a conceivable possibility that there should arise this manifold of apparent thought and purpose without admitting the reality of any thought in its source? The least candor must, we think, admit that no explanation can be furnished contentful to our human reason comparable to the theistic theory. An eternal, uncreated First Cause, the author of all things else, working with matchless skill and power along the lines of intelligent plan to an end worthy of such a being, is an absolute demand of reason. Displace the idea, and the vast magnificence, the deft and splendid skill, the delicate and marvelous harmony, the exact and unvarying adjustments interpenetrating, pervading, and binding the whole into one boundless and glorious unity, leave us in amaze and speechless wonder, but suggest nothing, mean nothing, teach nothing. It is not possible for intellect, until it has become obscured by madness, to entertain such a conjecture. The spontaneous verdict of reason is against it. All proof supports an opposite conclusion. The idea of a divine cause, on the other hand, is ennobling, giving dignity to being; clothing life and all things with worthiness and significance; satisfying reason; meeting the aspirations, longings, and pleadings of the affections; filling the measure of time and eternity with

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plan and purpose—in a word, it is what our reason always and certainly, except when benumbed or swayed by ignorance or passion, declares is and must be true. Among all our beliefs there is not one that has firmer footing or more rational ground.

“If I were in danger,” says Starr King, “of becoming skeptical, I believe that a fresh and vivid appreciation of the scientific revelations concerning our globe would appall me into faith. To think of this ball whirling and spinning about the sun, and to be an atheist ! its covering less in comparative thickness than a peach-skin, and its pulp a seething fire, and to feel that we are at the mercy of the forces that lash it like a top around the ecliptic, and of the raving flames that heave and beat for vent ; not more than an eighth of its surface inhabitable by man ; seas roaring around him, tropic heats smiting his brain, polar frosts threatening his blood, inland airs laden with fever, sea winds charged with consumption, hurricanes hovering in the sky, earthquakes slumbering under our feet, the conditions of life dependent on the most delicate oscillations of savage powers over which the wisest man is as powerless as a worm—to think of these, and not to have any confidence or belief in a power superior to these pitiless forces—not to have an inspiring faith that the land was made for human habitation and experience, and is sheltered by a ceaseless love from the hunger of the elements—why, I could as easily conceive of a person making his home unconcerned in an uncaged menagerie as of a man at rest in nature, seeing what it is, and not feeling that it is embosomed in God ! Go to nature ; go to the unroofed universe ; go to the awful pages of science—not to learn your religion, but to learn your need of it ; to learn that you are houseless without the sense of God as over-arching you by his power, pledging his care to you, twisting the furious forces of immensity into a protecting tent for your spirit’s home.”

*Argument from the influence of theories.* In closing the discussion of the question of divine existence we call attention to the respective tendencies and influences of the respective systems which have passed under review. It is safe to assume that the tendency and influence of truth is always to the greatest good, and of error and falsehood to disorder and evil; that, therefore, an idea which invariably ennobles and blesses mankind is thereby shown to be probably true, and one which tends to debasement and injury is thereby shown to be false. Tried by this rule, what is the conclusion to which we are forced? Let it be applied to nations and individuals. The results of pantheism and polytheism are seen in the nations where for ages they have held undisputed sway: have they developed virtue? have they created happiness? have they elevated and ennobled manhood? have they protected and refined womanhood? have they thrown guardianship and comfort around childhood? have they not, rather, obliterated every noble and humane instinct, and filled the lands and ages over which they have prevailed with pollutions, cruelties, and woe? Take the map of the world: where is darkness? Where is sorrow? Where is despair? Where are the homes that are never visited with the light of hope? The hearts to which no message of peace ever comes? These systems have been tried. What is the result? Is there any promise in them that ages longer would vary the results of the experiment?

There has never been a nation of atheists. What may we believe would be the influence of that idea upon individuals and communities? Once the experiment was tried upon a large scale. What was the effect? The scene of its frightful horrors was France during the Reign of Terror. Amid the ghastly horrors of that dreadful anarchy of which atheism was both parent and child it appeared in full-length exhibition, and had ample scope for its destructive energies. "It arose," says Godwin, "like



man's evil genius, amidst the thunders and storms and earthquakes of the French Revolution. Its appearance was the signal for anarchy and wild uproar; it let loose all the fierce and pent-up passions of man's depravity; subverted the very foundations of morality; uprooted the social system; and threatened to sweep away all the institutions and virtues of society from the face of the land. But the specter was too horrible to be endured. The philosophical magicians shrank from the spirits which their own sorceries had raised. The fickle nation, satiated with the riot of their own licentiousness, grew weary of the frightful power under whose auspices they had run to every excess; and the infamous Robespierre came forward to lay the fiend, and in a public assembly to compromise for the past frenzy of the people by an oration and a grand fête in honor of the Supreme Being.\* "This fête was held on the 20th of the month Prairial, in the second year of the French Republic, that is, the 8th of June, 1794, and the ceremonies, I believe, took place in the Champ de la Reunion. A discourse was pronounced by Robespierre, as President of the National Convention, beginning thus: 'The auspicious day is at length arrived which the French people consecrate to the Great Supreme,' etc. It seems that, after this oration, some effigy or symbol of atheism was cast into the fire, and a second oration was pronounced by the President just at the time when atheism disappeared and some representation of wisdom was exhibited to the people, commencing in this way: 'The monster which the genius of kings vomited on France is now annihilated, and with it may the crimes and misfortunes of the world disappear.'"† It was discovered that the nation itself could not survive under the baleful influence. A few brief months were sufficient to demonstrate the frightful fallacy, and as a measure of self-preservation the leaders of the misguided

\* Godwin on Atheism, p. 35.

† A foot-note from the same page.

people shudderingly turned back from the yawning abyss which their diabolical incantation had opened. Dr. Dwight says of the same ghastly tragedy of history :

“The miseries suffered by that single nation have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced and multiplied without a precedent, without number, and without names. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great prison, the inhabitants into felons, and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and bayonet, the sucking-boat, and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its execution and its funeral. Within the short time of ten years not less than three millions of human beings are supposed to have perished in that single country by the influence of atheism. Were the world to adopt and be governed by the doctrines of France, what crimes would not mankind perpetrate? what agonies would they not suffer?” \*

“The spread of atheism,” says Flint, “in a land may well be regarded with the most serious alarm. In the measure that a people ceases to believe in God and an eternal world it must become debased, disorganized, and incapable of achieving noble deeds. History confirms this on many a page. ‘All epochs,’ wrote Goethe, ‘in which faith, under whatever form, has prevailed, have been brilliant, heart-elevating, and fruitful, both to contemporaries and to posterity. All epochs, on the contrary, in which unbelief, in whatever form, has maintained a sad supremacy, even if for the moment they glitter with a false splendor, vanish from the memory of posterity, because none care to torment themselves with the knowledge of that which has been barren.’ ‘The idea of an intelligent first cause once destroyed,’ says Mazzini, ‘the existence of a moral law supreme over

\* Dwight’s “Theology,” vol. i, pp. 109, 110.



men, and constituting an obligation, a duty imposed upon all men, is destroyed with it; so also all possibility of a law of progress or intelligent design, regulating the life of humanity.' Both progress and morality then become mere transitory facts, having no deeper source than the tendency or impulse of individual organization; no other sanction than the arbitrary will or varying interests of individuals or forces. In fact, the only imaginable sources of life are God, chance, or the blind insuperable force of things; and if we deny the first to accept either of the others, in the name of whom or of what can we assume any right to educate? In the name of whom or of what can we condemn the man who abandons the pursuit of the general good through egotism? In the name of whom or of what can you protest against injustice, or assert your duty and right of contending against it? Whence can you deduce the existence of an aim common to all men, and therefore giving you an authority to declare to them that they are bound by duty to fraternal association, in pursuit of that common aim?" \*

"Should it be said that this situation of things would be so absolutely intolerable that mankind, unable to exist in it, would be compelled to unite in society and establish government, I admit the conclusion, and perfectly accord with the premises from which it is drawn. But what would be the nature of this government, and on what basis would it be founded? Its basis would plainly be dire necessity, existing in the impossibility of living without it, and its operations would be only those of force. The rulers would feel no sense of rectitude, possess no virtue, and realize no moral obligation. To all these things their fundamental principles would be hostile, and would render the very thought of them ridiculous. God is the only acknowledged source of moral obligation; but to them there would be no God, and therefore no such obliga-

\* "Anti-Theistic Theories," pp. 36, 37.

tion. Conformity to his laws is the only rectitude; but to these men there would be no such laws, and therefore no rectitude. Convenience, of course, or, in better words, passion and appetite, would dictate all the conduct of these rulers. The nature of a government directed by passion and appetite we know, imperfectly, by the histories of Caligula, Nero, and Heliogabalus; and more thoroughly, though still imperfectly, in those of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre and their associates. Who could be willing to see such a tissue of madness, cruelty, misery, and horror woven again? The subjects of such a government would, at the same time, be in the same manner under the influence of the same doctrines. Their conduct would accordingly be an exact counterpart to that of their rulers. Appetite would change every man into a swine, and passion into a tiger. Right would neither be acknowledged, nor be felt, nor exist. Whatever was coveted would be sought and obtained, if it could be done with safety. Whatever was hated would, so far as safety would permit, be hunted and destroyed. To deceive, to destroy, to betray, to maim, to torture, and to butcher would be the common employment and the common sport. The dearest and most venerable relations would be violated by incestuous pollution; and children—such of them, I mean, as were not cast under a hedge, thrown into the sea, or dashed against the stones—would grow up without a home, without a parent, without a friend. The world would become one vast den, one immeasurable sty, and the swine and the wolf would be degraded by a comparison with its inhabitants.

“Should it be doubted whether even atheism would terminate in such doctrines and such practices, the means of removing the doubt are at hand. Hobbes, Shaftesbury, and other English infidel writers, some of whom have disclaimed the character of atheists, and wished at last to be considered as embracing theism, have directly declared that there is no right except

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that which the *Leviathan*, or civil magistrate, pronounces to be such; and that rectitude, instead of being founded on the nature of things, or in the will of God, is the result of human institutions and arbitrary decisions merely. Little consideration is necessary to enable us to discover that this single principle involves all the consequences which I have attributed to atheism, dissolves at once all obligations to duty, annihilates virtue, and crumbles the bands which hold society together. Accordingly, Hobbes declares it *to be lawful to do and to get whatever we can with safety*; and multitudes of his coadjutors and followers have taught *that pollution in almost every form is lawful and desirable, and that animal enjoyment is the only real good*. The infidels of the French school, who have not found it necessary, like the English, to regard any appearances, have openly denied and ridiculed all the fundamental principles of morality, as well as of piety. I have been informed, by what I esteem good authority, that a numerous assembly of French literati being asked in turn, at one of their meetings, by their president, whether there was any such thing as moral obligation, answered in every instance that there was not. This happened a little before the French Revolution. Since the commencement of that stupendous event, as well as in many instances before, the body of French infidels have not only denied all the obligations which bind us to truth, justice, and kindness, but pitied and despised as a contemptible wretch, bewildered by ignorance and folly, the man who believes in its existence.” \*

But this showing, dreadful as it is, fails to reach the legitimate outcome of the system. It is, indeed, but a faint image of what the real result not only would be, but ought to be, if the system should be consistently carried out.

But in testing the value of the respective systems by their

\* Dwight's "Theology," vol. i, pp. 108, 109.

tendencies and influences as observed, it should be remembered that we have no true test. Neither system has ever yet been permitted to give a fair proof. Atheism, dire as its fruits have been, has never had a fair chance to demonstrate what its prevalence would do for the world, and the same is true of theism. To form a judgment each must be conceived to have a full and absolute sway, and an opportunity to work out its perfect and legitimate results. They must be tested, not by what they have done, but by what, were their principles fully carried out, they would do. We must ask the question, What would be the effect of the system were it universally accepted and reduced to practice? The true system should be allowed to operate without restriction, and must be true for all and be the law of life for all—must be a practical, working system. Its results, as universally worked, will practically determine its worthiness.

Now we raise the question, What would be the effect of atheism were it universally accepted and reduced to practice? We may not be able to determine with exactness, but we can approximate. The effects which have been observed on individual character and on communities where the theory has gained favor hint something, but do not give the full answer, for the reason that there are modifying influences. No atheist can be all that his system would make him when he lives among Christian influences and institutions. There are other influences which control and modify all his thinking and feeling and acting despite himself, and make him what the system itself would not.

Let us try to picture to our minds an atheistic world. What would be some of the things which would inevitably characterize such a world? Suppose it should now happen that this world would become atheistic, what modifications would be required to conform it to its new theory? The world would remain the same. The same human beings would be here. They would

2



have the same human nature. In these respects there would be no change. The changes would have to do with the thoughts, principles, feeling, practices, and institutions of men. How great the change in these respects would be will appear on a little reflection.

Let it be supposed either that atheism is true, or, if not true, by some misleading influence, some strange fatuity, it becomes the established conviction of mankind, the practical result would or ought to be the same in either case. What would and ought to be that result? If true it ought to be accepted—the proofs in its support ought to prevail—men ought to become atheists. Were they atheists in conviction they ought to act according to it. We are bound to look in the face of the practical consequences, and deliberately accept them and stand by them. Truth and honesty require this. If they should be discovered to be such that we could not accept them, then that discovery must be of value as an argument against accepting the theory. If it cannot be a working system without destroying us, then it ought not to be accepted as true, and ought not to be advocated. Its advocacy becomes a sin against humanity. If it be destructive its prevalence is ruin, and its promoters are the enemies of mankind. Suppose, then, it be accepted as true, what must follow?

By supposition it enters the world as a dominant faith. The earth over, the truth is discovered that there is no God. The argument is closed, and the great jury of the world votes, as its unalterable conviction, that all religious faith is groundless, for with the discovery that there is no God religious faith must perish, the tap-root being severed. We must reconstruct the world on the atheistic principle which we have accepted. The work of destruction must precede the work of reconstruction. Let us survey this field. It will require courage, but we must not shrink.

There is no God. Here we begin. We blazon this on our banner. We flaunt it before the stars. We stamp out the great *lie* that "the heavens declare the glory of God." We tear the odious name from our hearts. There is no Creator, no Governor, no Father in the universe. There is no mind that thinks of us, no heart that feels for us, no power that protects us, no almighty friend that loves us. We banish the thought. We write it down a delusion, a deceit, a lie. We obliterate the name from memory, from the affections. We will not pronounce it to our children; it shall never more be spoken among us; we renounce it forever. How does it feel? What says the reason to this? What say the affections? What says the conscience? What say our fears, our hopes, our longings, our sense of weakness and want? How does the sky, the sun, and the earth, and life and death, look now that there is no God? It matters nothing how they look. We must become used to the thought. The loneliness and the sadness will wear away after a little. We shall walk alone after a while. If it seems chilly and dark and lonely, the grave will soon cover us and hide our sorrows. In any event there is no God, and we must be resolute to look the situation in the face. What is, is. No attempt to deceive ourselves will be of avail.

Next we must get rid of conscience. It is an impertinence. It proceeds upon the theory that there is a right and wrong. If there be no God there can be no law above us; we alone determine what is right and wrong. It is as we make it. Out with the tyrant! We must abandon prayer and reverence and worship. There is now no object of worship. There is no one to whom to pray. We must give up the hope of the future. Death is eternal sleep—the dead are not. "I was not, and was conceived. I lived and did a little work. I am not, and care not." \* This is henceforth our motto. The dead are no more

\* Clifford.



—we shall soon not be. There is nothing but dust. Stamp out the lie of immortality. It must neither be written nor spoken nor thought again. It must go overboard amid the universal wreck. Souls are a myth—out with the impertinence! We are but beasts. Let us write the brave words once and forever. The swine is our brother. In birth and death we are twins. Our mother, our sister, our wife, our child, are beasts. Write it down, and let it stand. The rubbish of false teaching must be razed from our memories. Why shall we longer delude ourselves? Why impose specious fictions on ourselves? Why continue to invent fables which but impose burdens of meaningless hopes and fears, which restrain our present comforts, and which can bring us no future good? This earth is our home; this life ends all: “let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” This is the true philosophy of the theory of atheism. It has no root which can grow or support any other practice.

Is it said, But our nature remains; we must still act according to it? True; but what is our nature? It is impossible that it should contain the ethical, for there is no law except as its convenience and prompting.

We have now cleansed the temple of lies which we called our souls of all the delusions which had made their nest for ages there. It is torn down; temple and rubbish are rubbed out together. The chief work is done. The *two great lies* are exploded. Write it down! Flaunt it before the stars! Publish it from rim to rim of the world! Post it up in the market-places! Blazon it! Recite it at the marriage! Chant it at the funeral! Teach it to the children! “*There is no God. Man is a beast. There is no soul. All is dust. The dead are not. The living soon will not be. We care not.*” How does it feel? Never mind, we shall soon get used to it! It will not be so hard with our children. They will make no such sacrifices.

We must see to that. We must make thorough work of it. Rub out all the memories, the loves, the hopes we have cherished—the beautiful dreams. Rub them out! Never again speak them. The children must never hear them. Rub them out! Erase every line—the memories on the nerves. We have no souls now. Stamp on the nerves the new truths, and adopt the names demanded by them. They will twinge, may be, but burn them in, and burn the old words out.

Next, to complete the work of destruction, we must raze language and institutions. The language we use is full of lies. There are single words that pollute the air with falsehood. They must be abolished and never again be pronounced or written. They must be hunted down in all the languages and dialects of the world, and all hints and tokens of them obliterated. They are not the words that we are accustomed to call foul and polluting. They are appropriate and must be staple in the revised nomenclature, but they are the blasphemous words which are found on the lips of religion—the words God, the Almighty, the Holy Creator, Redeemer, Saviour, heaven, hell, angels, spirit, soul, sin, holiness, right, wrong, immortality, prayer, worship, resurrection—these and all modified forms of them, and kindred words, must be erased from the languages of the earth. Most of the books of the world must be burned up. The remainder must be purged, and every line and allusion and implication in these directions must be expunged. The Bible must go, and “Rock of Ages”—all the hymns of the ages. Not a fragment must be left of the useless lumber—the glittering lies! The grave-yards must be plowed up. All but the names must be rubbed out. Why leave the stones? We do not perpetuate the names or resting-place of even pet beasts. We are beasts. The temples must go. No more assemblies of worship. The sabbath, the voice of song and prayer—all sacred things. There is nothing sacred any more.

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Down with the universal fabric of lies, built on the idea of a God, and its eldest born fable that man has a soul. We must call all things by new names; we must make a new world for thought; we must invent new terms; we must reconstruct our ideas and feelings; we must adapt the whole mechanism of life and society to the new conditions. The laws regulating our pursuits and governing our conduct must all become new. What shall they be?

Now let the reconstruction begin. We have cleared the ground. We have got down to the hard-pan of truth—the unadulterated granite, hard, dry, barren, cold—here let us lay the foundations of our reconstructed world. *There is no God. We are beasts. There is no hereafter.* These be the granite on which we are to build.

What have we to reconstruct with? By concession, man and the world—nothing more: but it is man bereft of a soul, and a world bereft of a maker; man, an irresponsible animal, born yesterday, doomed to perish to-morrow; but, yet, man with a mind and a conscience—a mind that will think and a conscience that will feel; a mind that, despite himself, will persist in thinking a God, a moral law, eternal retribution; a mind that cannot divest itself of aspirations and longings which other animals do not possess; a mind feeling impulses and swayed by ideals which nothing of the earth and time can satisfy; a mind which cannot separate itself from its past, and which cannot refrain from hope of a boundless future, and apprehension as well.

How, now, with these elements and nothing more, shall we proceed with the reconstruction?

As I see it, there are two ways before us. One is to return to a state of "*puris naturalibus*"—that is, to accept the situation, and, seeing we are but of the common kinship of animals, to act as such, and, discarding all the artificial distinctions we in

our vanity have incumbered ourselves with, return to a state of nature and common level with our kindred. This we shall be hardly able to accomplish. The other is to reduce the reconstruction within the narrow limits of saving just so much as will accommodate our lusts and be convenient for our temporal existence.

How shall we proceed? Our physical wants remain as they were. We have the same minds with which to grapple with the problem. Industries will produce the same results. Shall we therefore reach or continue to maintain the same material condition? It might so seem. But fundamental and governing ideas inspire and regulate industries. We must eat, but how now shall we determine the industries necessary to obtain food? Who shall do the work? Of course those who have to. The strong are able to force the duty on the weak. What shall hinder? Lust makes demands. How shall the supply be regulated? How is it among beasts? Why shall it be different among us? We may have what we choose and can get. Who shall hinder? There is no law now but the will of the strongest. Brute force and cunning rule the world. Who can doubt the outcome?

Having determined that we will advance along artificial lines, it remains that we select what ideas and practices we will carry forward, only agreeing that we shall never again be dominated by the frauds which have so marred our past. What will we preserve? Who shall determine? The majority? How? By vote or by power? Shall we keep up government? What kind? Let us agree, all of us—it will of course be an easy thing to agree—that we will preserve government, the present boundaries of States, for instance, and the prevailing forms as now existing. The family—let it be the monogamous family; can we agree upon that? Industries, trade, the arts, schools—the general present status, with improvements; such

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as may naturally grow out of the free play of mind. We will cultivate the sciences and arts. We will carry on the farm and the trades. We will keep school and shop. We will have merchants and bankers and doctors and lawyers and laborers. We will elect presidents and law-makers. We will provide for courts and amusements. The theater and play-house shall be kept open. We will have prisons and work-houses for the vicious and indolent, and hospitals and reformatories for the sick and poor and unfortunate. Could any thing be plainer?

All that is necessary is courage—self-reliance. The world will move on grandly without God. Relieved of conscience and the priests all trouble will vanish. We shall want no future heaven. Heaven will be here. Men will die—there will be some hard things, but we must learn to endure these as the inevitability of our lot. There must be some poor and some rich, some sick and maimed, the heathen and uncivilized nations; some must do the hard work and live on the hard fare. Who shall determine these matters in the new order, now that conscience and God are put away? We will still love, and our loved will still die. How shall we think of the dead? As no more? It looks hard, but we shall soon become used to it. Each man must learn to be a sufficiency for himself—must live for himself. What about the children? Are we certain that the scheme will work well? Does it provide for our wants? Are the securities safe? Are there no dangers of wreck on some lee-shore—some rock or hidden reef? To the thoughtful I am sure the outlook for the experiment is not encouraging. The portents are dark and stormy. Wars and tumults bicker on the face of the advancing age. The strong devour the weak. Woman becomes a prey to lust. Childhood perishes in neglect. Savage armies prowl for plunder. Barbarism comes again. Humanity, falling a prey to its own acknowledged and hence-

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forth regnant bestiality, bereft of its hopes and robbed of its divine instincts, sinks, a degraded and desecrated mass, into an abyss of misery and pollution endless and bottomless.

How could it be otherwise? With no God, what remains to govern but lust? With no future but the grave, no present but animal cravings, what shall hinder? What shall kindle aspiration, what restrain passion, when nature discourages the one, and gives rein to the other? The issue will be just such as it ought to be in a world where no God reigns, and where therefore there are no foundations for virtue, and no possibilities of good except the transient and passing indulgence of desire; but in such a world humanity as it is constituted could not exist; it is not a world for man. The theory which implies it is proven to be a fabric of lies, since it is unsuited to man's nature and destructive of his interests, and since it contradicts all the implications of being and instincts. No God! The imagination is madness; the belief the knell of hope; the assertion a lie; the proclamation treason; were it true, the universe itself were a fraud, written over on every atom with falsehood and treachery. No God! Were the awful secret once revealed the very stars would fade in the vault of heaven, the universe, orphaned, would wither and die. If no God, nothing. The supports removed, being itself topples into annihilation. Nothingness broods over the infinite expanse of endless night. No God, nothing. The postulates are inseparable. One cannot be thought even without the other except in frenzy which knows no law. Read Jean Paul Richter's dream of a Godless Universe. I transcribe it:

"I was lying once, on a summer evening, in the sunshine, and I fell asleep. Methought I awoke in the church-yard. The down rolling wheels of the steeple-clock, which was striking eleven, had awakened me. In the emptied night-heaven I looked for the sun, for I thought an eclipse was veiling<sub>2</sub> him



with the moon. All the graves were open, and the iron doors of the charnel-house were swinging to and fro by invisible hands. On the walls flitted shadows, which proceeded from no one, and other shadows stretched upward in the pale air. In the open coffins none now lay sleeping but the children. Over the whole heaven hung in large folds a gray, sultry mist, which a giant shadow, like vapor, was drawing down, nearer, closer, and hotter.

“Above me I heard the distant fall of avalanches; under me the first step of a boundless earthquake. The church wavered up and down with two interminable dissonances, which struggled with each other in it, endeavoring in vain to mingle in unison. At times a gray glimmer hovered along the windows, and under it the lead and iron fell down molten. The net of the mist and the tottering earth brought me into that hideous temple, at the door of which, in two poison-bushes, two glittering basilisks lay brooding.

“I passed through unknown shadows, on whom ancient centuries were impressed. All the shadows were standing round the empty altar, and in all not the heart, but the breast, quivered and pulsed. One dead man only, who had just been buried there, still lay in his coffin without quivering breast, and on his smiling countenance stood a happy dream. But at the entrance of one living he awoke, and smiled no longer; he lifted his heavy eyelids, but within was no eye, and in his beating breast there lay instead of a heart a wound. He held up his hands and folded them to pray; but the arms lengthened out and dissolved; and the hands, still folded together, fell away.

“Above, on the church-dome stood the dial-plate of eternity, whereon no number appeared, and which was its own index; but a black finger pointed thereon, and the dead sought to see the time by it.

"Now sank from aloft a noble, high Form, with a look of un-effaceable sorrow, down to the altar, and all the dead cried out, 'Christ! is there no God?' He answered, 'There is none!' The whole shadow of each then shuddered, not the breast alone; and one after the other, all, in this shuddering, shook into pieces.

"Christ continued: 'I went through the worlds, I mounted into the suns, and flew with the galaxies through the wastes of heaven; but there is no God! I descended as far as being casts its shadow, and looked down into the abyss, and cried, "Father, where art thou?" But I heard only the everlasting storm which no one guides, and the gleaming rainbow of creation hung without a sun that made it, over the abyss, and trickled down. And when I looked up to the immeasurable world for the divine eye, it glared on me with an empty, black, bottomless eye-socket, and eternity lay upon chaos, eating it and ruminating it. Cry on, ye dissonances; cry away, ye shadows, for He is not!'

"The pale-grown shadows flitted away, as white vapors which frost has formed with the warm breath disappear, and all was void. O, then came—fearful for the heart!—the dead children who had been awakened in the church-yard, into the temple and cast themselves before the high Form on the altar, and said, 'Jesus, have we no Father?' And he answered, with streaming tears, 'We are all orphans, I and you; we are without Father!'

"Then shrieked the dissonances still louder; the quivering walls of the temple parted asunder; and the temple and the children sank down, and the whole earth and the sun sank after it, and the whole universe sank with its immensity before us; and above, on the summit of immeasurable nature, stood Christ, and gazed down into the universe checkered with its thousand suns, as into the mine bored out of the eternal night,



in which the suns hung like mine lamps, and the galaxies like silver veins.

“And as he saw the grinding press of worlds, the torch dance of celestial wild fires, and the coral banks of beating hearts; and as he saw how world after world shook off its glimmering souls upon the sea of death, as a water-bubble scatters swimming lights on the waves, then, majestic as the highest of the finite, he raised his eyes toward the nothingness, and toward the void immensity, and said: ‘Dead dumb nothingness! Cold, everlasting necessity! Frantic chance! Know ye what this is that lies beneath you? When will ye crush the universe in pieces, and me? Chance, knowest thou what thou doest when with thy hurricanes thou walkest through that snow powder of stars, and extinguishest sun after sun, and that sparkling dew of heavenly light goes out as thou passest over it? How is each so solitary in this wide grave of the all! I am alone with myself! O Father! O Father! where is thy infinite bosom, that I might rest on it? Ah, if each soul is its own father and creator, why can it not be its own destroyer, too? Is this beside me yet a man? Unhappy one! Your little life is the sigh of nature or only its echo; a convex mirror throws its rays into that dust-cloud of dead men’s ashes down on the earth, and thus you, cloud-formed, wavering phantasms, arise. Look down into the abyss, over which clouds of ashes are moving; mists full of worlds reek up from the sea of death; the future is a mounting mist, and the *present* is a falling one. Knowest thou thy earth again?’

“Here Christ looked down, and his eye filled with tears, and he said, ‘Ah, I was once there; I was still happy then; I had still my infinite Father, and looked up cheerfully from the mountains into the immeasurable heaven, and pressed my mangled breast on his healing form, and said even in the bitterness of death, “Father, take thy Son from this bleeding hull,

2

and lift him to thy heart!" Ah, ye too happy inhabitants of earth, ye still believe in *him*. Perhaps even now your sun is going down, and ye kneel amid blossoms and brightness and tears, and lift trustful hands, and cry with joy-streaming eyes to the opened heaven. Me, too, thou knowest omnipotent, and all my wounds, and at death thou receivest me and closest them all. Unhappy creatures, at death they will not be closed! Ah, when the sorrow-laden lays himself, with galled back, into the earth, to sleep till a fairer morning full of truth, full of virtue and joy, he awakens in a stormy chaos, in the everlasting midnight, and then comes the morning, and no soft, healing hand, and no infinite Father. Mortal, beside me, if thou still livest, pray to him; else hast thou lost him forever.'

"And as I fell down, and looked into the sparkling universe, I saw the upborne rings of the giant serpent, the serpent of eternity, which had coiled itself round the all of worlds, and the rings sank down, and encircled the all doubly; and then it wound itself, innumerable ways, round nature, and swept the worlds from their places, and, crashing, squeezed the temple of immensity together into the church burying-ground, and all grew strait, dark, fearful; and an immeasurably extended hammer was to strike the last hour of time, and shiver the universe asunder, . . . *when I awoke.*" \*

I transfer to my pages an extensive quotation from Theodore Parker. The extract is vivid and beautiful, in Mr. Parker's peculiar style, and deserves to live as the testimony of a man the furthest possible from a superstitious reverence for the popular faith. It is a ghastly but true portrait of atheism.

"Real atheism," he says, "is a denial of the existence of any God; a denial of the *genus* God, of the actuality of all possible

\* Carlyle's Essays, p. 223—"Jean Paul Friedrich Richter."



ideas of God. It denies that there is any mind or being which is the cause and providence of the universe, and which intentionally produces the order, beauty, and harmony thereof with the constant modes of operation therein. To be consistent, it ought to go a step further, and deny that there is any law, order, or harmony in existence, or any constant modes of operation in the world. The real speculative atheist denies the existence of the qualities of God; denies that there is any mind of the universe, any self-conscious providence, any providence at all. If he follow out his principle, he must deny the actuality of the infinite, deny that there is any being or cause of finite things which is self-consciously powerful, wise, just, loving, and self-faithful. To him there are only finite things—each self-originated, self-sustained, self-directed—and no more; the universe, comprising the world of matter and the world of mind, is a finite whole, made up of finite parts; each part is imperfect, the whole incomplete; the finite has no infinite to depend on as its ground and cause; there is no plan in the universe or any part thereof.

“Now see the subjective effect of this theory. By subjective I mean the effect it produces on the sentiments and opinions within me.

“1. Look at it first as a theory of the world of matter.

“In respect to the origin of matter, both theist and atheist labor under the same difficulty: neither knows any thing about that. I know men, chiefly theologians, pretend to understand all about the creation of matter originally; and to hear them talk you would suppose it was as easy to comprehend how ‘God made a world out of nothing,’ as it is to understand how a tailor makes a coat out of broadcloth or velvet. But if a man looks with a philosophical eye he sees this is an extraordinarily difficult thing. The philosophical theist admits the existence of the universe, and the atheist does the same; but in the present

state of our knowledge neither atheist nor theist knows the mode of origination. You may go back a good ways and study the formation of an egg, a fish, seed, tree, or rock, or the solar system, after the fashion of Laplace; but the manner of originating matter, out of which the egg, fish, seed, tree, rock, and solar system are made, is just as far off as ever; and it seems to be beyond the reach of the faculties of man. I will not say that it is so, only, in the present stage of man's development and scientific acquirements, it seems so. The origin of body—of any specific form of matter—may be made out, but the origin of matter, the primitive, universal substance whence body comes, still eludes our search. I know that ecclesiastical theists often call the philosophical atheist very hard names because he denies that we can understand this process at present; the charge is gratuitous.

“But the real speculative atheist must declare that matter, the general substance whereof body is made, is eternal, but without thought or will; and the specific forms of existence—of egg, fish, seed, tree, rock, and solar system—all came with no forethought preceding them; came by ‘chance;’ that is to say, by the ‘fortuitous concourse of atoms,’ which have no thought or will, and that they indicate no mind, no plan, no purpose, no providence. That is the atheistic theory of the universe; compare it with facts.

“See how this scheme works on a great scale in the material world. The solar system has a sun and numerous planets; they are all distributed in a certain ratio of distance; they move round the sun with a certain velocity, always exactly proportionate to their distance from the sun; this holds good with regard to the nearest and the farthest. They move in paths of the same form; they are ruled by the same laws of motion; they receive and emit light in the same way. The laws which are the constant modes of planetary operation.

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when we come to study them are found to be exceedingly intricate; yet they are uniform, and the same for one planet as for another; the same for a satellite as for a planet. They are perfectly kept, and so uniform in action that if you go back to the time of Thales, five hundred years before Christ, you can calculate the eclipse of the moon, and find that it took place exactly as the historians of that day relate; or you may go forward five days, or five years, or five thousand years, and calculate with the same precision. So accurate are these laws that an astronomer studying the perturbations of a remote planet, the phenomena of its economy not accounted for by the attraction of bodies known to be in existence, conjectures the existence of some other planet which causes the phenomena not accounted for. Nay, by mathematical science he determines its place and size, inferring the fact of a new planet outside of the uttermost ring of the solar system; at a certain minute he turns his telescope to the calculated spot, and, for the first time, the star of Leverrier springs before the eye of conscious man!

“Now the atheist must declare that all this order of the solar system was brought about by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, and indicates no mind, plan, or purpose in the universe. This is absurd! A man might as well deny the fact of the law of the solar system, or the existence of the sun, or of himself, as to deny that these facts, thus coördinated, indicate a mind, denote a plan, and serve a purpose calculated beforehand.

“See the same thing on a smaller scale. The composition of the air is such that first it helps light and warm the earth; is a swaddling garment to keep in the specific heat of the earth, and prevent it from radiating off into the cold, void spaces of the universe. Next, by its free circulation as wind, it helps cleanse and purify the earth. Then, it promotes vege-

tation ; carries water from the tropics to the Norwegian pine ; furnishes much of the food of plants, their means of life. Next, it helps animal life—is the vehicle of respiration. All plants which grow, all things that breathe, continually suck the breasts of heaven. Again, it is a most important instrument for the service of man ; through this we communicate by artificial light and artificial sound. Without it all were motionless and dumb ; not a bird could sing or fly, not a cricket creak to his partner at night, not a man utter a word ; and a voiceless ocean would ebb and flow upon a silent shore. The thought-mill would be as idle as the windmill. Man kindles his fire by the air, it moves his ship, winnows his corn, fans his temples, carries his balloon.

“Now the air is capable of these, and a great many other functions in virtue of its peculiar composition—so much nitrogen, so much oxygen. No other combination of elements could ever have accomplished this. Vary the composition, have a little more nitrogen or oxygen, and you alter its powers as a vehicle of radiation, evaporation, vegetation, purification, respiration, communication, and combustion. The atheist must believe that this composition is not the result of any mind, that it serves no plan and purpose, and came by the fortuitous concurrence of matter ; no more ; that it is all chance !

“If I should say that this sermon came by the fortuitous concurrence of matter—that last Monday I shut up pen, ink, and paper in a drawer, and to-day went and found there a sermon, which had come by the fortuitous concurrence of pen, ink, and paper—every man would think I was very absurd. And yet I should not commit so great a quantity of absurdity as if I were to say ‘the composition of air came by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms ;’ for it takes a much greater mind to bring together and compose the air which fills a thimble than to produce all the sermons, yea, literature, in the world.



“If the atheist says there is mind in matter which arranges the planets, controls their distances, their revolutions, their constant modes of operation—that this mind in matter arranges the elements in the air so as to perform all the functions which I have named, and many more—then he is false to his atheism, and becomes a theist; for he no longer denies the qualities of God, but only calls them by a different name.

“With atheism as the theory of the universe, the world ought to be a jumble of parts with no contexture; for the moment you admit the existence of order in the very least form, a constant mode of operation on the very smallest scale—why, you must admit the existence of the mind which devised the order and the mode of operation; and if you call the mind *Geist*, or God, or Nature, or Jehovah, it makes small odds; the question is not about the name, but about the fact.

“Now the world is nowhere a jumble. Things are not ‘huddled and lumped together’ in the composition of the eyeball of the emmet, or of the solar system. Every part of the universe is an argument against atheism as a theory thereof.

“2. Look next at atheism as the theory of individual human life. According to the atheistic scheme there is no conscious power which is the cause of me and of my life—which is the providence thereof; no mind which arranges the world in reference to me, or me in reference to the world. Does that conclusion satisfy the instinctive desires of human nature any better than it accounts for the facts of material nature?

“Look at human life from this point of view. I see but a little way behind, around, or before me; and yet, in all directions, my power of knowledge is greater than my power of work. I know little of the consequences which will follow from my action. I invent an alphabet; I organize the elements into gunpowder, the printing-press, the steam-engine, or men into a representative form of government, with a written

constitution. I know very little of the effect which these vast forces will produce in the world of man. I know that the steam-engine will turn my mill, that the printing-press will print my newspaper, that gunpowder will explode at the touch of fire; but I do not know the effect which these organizations, newly introduced to the world, are to have on the families, the communities, the churches, the states of mankind, and on the general development of the human race.

“The atheist says there is nothing which knows any better, or which knows any more about it; nothing which uses these inventions as forces for the advancement of any purpose. ‘The universe,’ says he, ‘has no self-conscious mind except the mind of man, and he is only “darkly wise and meanly great.” Nothing in the world,’ says our atheist, ‘knows what a day may bring forth. The universe is drifting in the void inane, and knows nothing of its whence, its whither, or its whereabouts. Man is drifting in the universe, and knows little of his whereabouts, nothing of his whence or whither. There is no mind, no providence, no power, which knows any better; nothing which guides and directs man in his drifting, or the universe in the wide, weltering waste of time. Nothing is laid up for to-morrow. My life also tends to nothing.’

“I am joyful: joy is very well, but nothing comes of it. I am sorrowful, and suffer: this is hard, but it is no part of a plan which is to lead to something further. And when my manhood falls away, and my body dissolves, all that is to lead to nothing better. My baby-teeth fall out, giving way to my man-teeth, but that is all chance, indicating no forethought of a mind which provided for the man before the baby was born!

“I serve men, and get their hate and scorn: the Sadducee grumbles because I tell him of his soul and immortality; the Pharisee, because I demand that he devour widows’ houses no



more, nor for a pretense make long prayers; and both of these hunkers, the hunker Sadducee and the hunker Pharisee, throw stones at me, and put me to death. It all comes to nothing for me; I am a dead body, and not a live man: that is all I get for my virtue!

“I am a brave man, and my country needs me to repel the Spanish armada, or to keep imperial Nicholas, or Francis, or papal Pius the Ninth, or the little-hearted President Napoleon, from kidnapping my liberty. I go out to do battle, and I come home scarred all over with heroism, half my limbs hewed off, aching at every pore. Or, I die on the spot; I carry no heroism, no manhood with me; I am a heap of dust which other dust will soon cover; but the manhood which once enchanted this dust with valiant life is put out and quenched forever—it is all gone; it is nothing. My brother in that time of peril was a coward, and when war blew the trumpet and his country called on him he crept under the oven. When all is over, and quiet is restored, he comes out with a whole skin, and over my unburied bones he marches into peace and carousing, and says, ‘A pretty fool was this man to lay down his life for me and get nothing for it!’ And the atheist says, ‘He is right.’

“The patriot soldier gets his wounds and crutch, the martyr his fagot and flame, Jesus his cup of bitterness and cross of death, and that is all! Dives has his purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day, more heedless than the dogs are of the beggar at his gate. Lazarus has his sores and the medical attendance of the hounds in the street, but death ends all!

“The mother, whose self-denial leads her to forget every thing but her feeble, crippled child, has nothing but her transient affection and watching; she dies and all is ended. Another mother abandons her sickly, pestilential child to die of her neglect, and she lives forty years longer in joyous wantonness and riot; and when she also passes away it is to the same

end as the other; only she for her falseness has had forty years of animal joy, and the noble mother for her faithfulness has had nothing but an instantaneous death. And my atheist says, 'There is no future world to compensate the mother who died for love!'

"My life is a great disappointment, let me suppose; and for no fault of mine but for my excellence, my justice, my philanthropy, for the service I have rendered to mankind. I am poor, and hated, and persecuted. I flee to my atheist for consolation, and I ask, 'What does all this come to?' And he says, 'It comes to nothing. Your nobleness will do you no good. You will die, and your self-denial will do mankind no service; for there is no plan or order in all these things; every thing comes and goes by the fortuitous concourse of atoms. If you had been a hunker you might have had money, ease, honor, respectability, and a long life, with the approbation of your minister. You had better have been so.'

"I lay in the ground one dearest to me; some only daughter—her life but a bud, not a blossom; yet, mere bud as it is, the better part of my life. In the agony of my heart I flee to my atheist for comfort; and he cannot give me a drop of water from the tip of his finger, while I am tormented in that unutterable grief. 'A worm,' says he, 'has eaten up your rose-bud. Get what comfort you can. This is the last spring day; no leaf will be green again for you.'

"I come myself to die. I have labored to extend my existence, which every man loves to do; and so I reached back and sought to find out who my fathers and grandfathers were, and trace out my pedigree. I wished to extend myself collaterally, and reached forth toward nature, and linked myself with that by science and art, and with man by love. The same desire to extend myself urges me to go forward, instinct with immortality, and join myself again to my dear ones, and to



mankind, for eternal life. But my atheist stands between me and futurity. 'Death is the end,' says he. 'This is a world without a God; you are a body without a soul; there is a here but no hereafter; an earth without a heaven. Die, and return to your dust!'

"'I am a philosopher,' says he; 'I have been up to the sky, and there is no heaven. Look through my telescope: that which you see afar off there is a little star in the nebula of Orion's belt, so distant that it will take light a thousand million years to come from it to the earth, journeying at the rate of twelve million miles a minute. There is no heaven this side of that; you see all the way through; there is not a speck of heaven. And do you think there is any behind it?

"'Talk about your soul! I have been into man with my scalpel in my hand, and my microscope, and there is no soul. Man is bones, blood, bowels, and brain. Mind is matter. Do you doubt this? Here is Arnoldi's perfect map of the brain: there is no soul there; nothing but nerves.

"'Talk of providence! There is no such thing. I have been through the universe, and there is no God. God is a whim of men; nature is a fortuitous concourse of atoms; man is a fortuitous concourse of atoms; thought is a fortuitous function of matter, a fortuitous result of a fortuitous result; a chance shot from the great wind-gun of the universe, which itself is also a chance shot from a chance charge of a chance gun accidentally loaded, pointed at random, and fired off by chance. Things happen; they are not arranged. There is luck, and ill-luck; but there is no providence. Die into dust! True, you sigh for immortality; you long for the dear arms of father and mother, that went to the ground before you, and for the rose-bud daughter prematurely nipped. True, you complain of tears that have left a deep and bitter furrow in your cheek; you complain of virtue not

2

rewarded ; of nobleness that felt for the infinite ; of a mighty hungering and thirst for everlasting life ; a longing and a yearning after God. All that is nothing. Die and be still !' Does not that content you ? Does this theory square with the facts of consciousness ?

"3. Now look at atheism as a theory of the life of mankind. Man came by chance ; the family by chance ; society by chance ; nations by chance ; the human race by chance. Man is his own sole guide and guardian. No mind ever grouped the faculties together and made a cosmic man—it was all chance. There is no mind which groups the solitary into families, these into nations, and the nations into a world—it is all chance. There is no providence for man, except in human heads ; politicians are the only legislators ; their statutes the only law ; 'there is no higher law.' Kings and presidents are the only rulers : there is no great father and mother of all the nations of mankind. There is no mind that thinks for man, no conscience to enact eternal laws, no heart to love me when father and mother forsake me and let me fall ; no will of the universe to marshal the nations in the way of wisdom, justice, and love. History is the fortuitous concourse of events, as nature of atoms ; there is no plan nor purpose in it which is to guide our going out and coming in. True, there is a mighty going, but it goes nowhere ! True, there has been a progressive development of man's body and mind, and the functions thereof ; a growth of beauty, wisdom, justice, affection, piety ; but it is an accident, and may end to-morrow, and the next day there may be a decay of mankind, a decay of beauty, intellect, justice, affection ; science, art, literature, civilization may be all forgot, and the naked savage come and burn up Boston, New York, London, and Paris, and drown the last baby of civilization in the blood of the last mother. You are not sure that any good will come of it ; there is no reason to

2



think that any good will come of it. Says atheism, 'Everywhere is instability and insecurity.'

"Look on the aspect of human misery, the outrage, blood, and wrong which the earth groans under. Here is the wife of a drunkard, whose marriage life is a perpetual violation. She married for love a man who once loved her; but the mayor and aldermen of the city insisted that he should be made a beast. A beast, did I say? Ye fourfooted and creeping things of the earth, I beg your pardon! Even the swine is sober in his sty. The mayor and aldermen of the city made this man a drunkard; and the poor wife watches over him, cleanses his garments, wipes off the foulness of his debauch, and stitches her life into the garments which some wealthy tailor will sell—giving her for wages the tenth part of his own profit—and which some dandy will wear—thanking the 'gods of dandies' that he is not like that poor woman, so ill-clad and industrious. She will stitch her life into the garments, working at starvation wages, and yet will pay the fines to keep the street drunkard out of the House of Correction, where the city government hides the bodies of the men it slays. She toils till at length the silver cord of life has got loosed, and the golden bowl begins to break. She goes to my atheist and asks, 'What comes of all this? Am I to have any compensation for my suffering?' And the atheist says, 'Nothing comes of it; there is no compensation. You are a fool. You had better have got a license from the mayor and aldermen to prey on other men's wives about you; and then you might have had wealth and ease and respectability. You ought to drink blood, and not shed your own.'

"'Abel's blood cries out of the ground,' continues our atheist, but there is no ear of justice to hear it, and Cain, red with slaughter, goes off welcomed to the arms of the daughters of Nod; the victims of nobleness rot in their blood; booty and

beauty are both for him. The world festers with the wounds of the hero, but there is no cure for them: the hero is a fool—his wounds prove it. Saint Catherine has her wheel, Saint Andrew his sword, Saint Sebastian his arrows, Saint Lawrence his fire of green wood; Paul has his fastings, his watchings, his scourgings and his jail, his perils of waters, of robbers of the city and the wilderness, his perils among false brethren, and Jesus his thorny crown, his malefactor's death; Kossuth gets his hard fate, and Francis the Stupid sits on the Hungarian throne; the patriots of France broil in the tropic marshes of Cayenne, and Napoleon, surrounded by cultivated women who make for him merchandise of their loveliness, and by able men who make merchandise of their intellect, Napoleon fills his own bosom and the throne of France with his debauchery; Europe is dotted with dungeons—Austrian, Hungarian, German, French, Italian—they are crowded with the noblest men of the age, who there do perpetual penance for their self-denial, their wisdom, their justice, their affection for mankind, and their fidelity to God. These die as the fool dieth. There is no hope for any one of them, in a body without a soul, in an earth without a heaven, in a world without a God. ‘Does not that content you?’

“All the world over, oppression plies its bloody knout—its well-paid metropolitan priest blessing the scourge before it is laid on. The groans of the poor come up from the bogs of Ireland, from the rich farms of England, from her crowded manufactories. Men make circumstances in London which degrade two hundred thousand people below the cannibals of New Zealand, and starve the Irish into exile, brutality, or death. The sighing of the prisoner breaks out from the jail of the tormentor, who

                    Holds the body bound,  
But knows not what a range the spirit takes.



“The iron gripe of kings chokes the throat of the people. Every empire is girded at the loins with an iron belt of soldiers, which eats into the nation’s flesh. Siberia fattens with freedom’s noble dead, and in America three millions of men drag out a life in chains, bought as cattle, sold as cattle, counted as cattle, only not prayed for in the Christian churches as cattle are ; and the little commissioner who kidnaps at Boston, and the great stealers of men who enact the statutes which make American women into marketable things, are honored in all the ‘Christian’ churches of the land. Most of ‘the great men,’ all the ‘citizens of eminent gravity,’ all the ‘unimpeachable divines,’ are on the side of wrong. Cry out, blood of Abel ! there is no ear to hear you. Victims of nobleness, rot in your blood ! it will enrich the ground. Ye saints—Catherine, Andrew, Sebastian, Lawrence, Paul, Jesus—bear your rack and gibbet as best your bodies may ! Kossuth, stoop to Francis the Stupid ! Ye patriots of France, kneel to Napoleon the Little, and be jolly in the Sodom which he makes. Ye that groan in the dungeons of the world, who starve in its fertile soils, who wear chains in free America—yield to the Jeffreyses, the Haynaus, the slave-hunters, and the priests ! for there is a body without a soul, an earth without a heaven, a world without a God. Atheism is the theory of the universe ; and there is no God, no Cause, no Mind, no Providence.

“The atheist looks on the lives of the noble men

Who in the public breach devoted stood,  
And for their country’s cause were prodigal of blood,

and he says, ‘These men were fools ; every man of them might have been as sleek, as comfortable, and as fat as the oiliest priest that mammon consecrates. They were fools, and only fools, and fools continually. To the individual hero there comes nothing but blood and wounds.’

“He looks on the nations that failed in their struggle against a tyrant’s chain : Poland fell, and Kosciusko went to London, only ‘Peter Pindar’ to welcome the exile ; Greece went down in Turkish night ; Italy and Spain must bow them to a tyrant’s will—and the atheist has no hope. The States which fail read no lesson to mankind, and have no return for their unblest toil. He looks on the nations now in their agony and bloody sweat, sitting in darkness and iron ; he sees no angel strengthening them. What a picture the world presents : heroism unrequited, paid with misery ; vice on a throne, and nobleness in chains. Want, misery, violence, meet him every-where ; and for his comfort he has his creed—a body without a soul, an earth without a heaven, a world without a God !

“The atheist sends out his intellect to seek for the controlling mind, which is the cause of the created, the reason of the conceivable, the ground of the true, and the loveliness of things beautiful. His intellect comes back and has brought nothing, has found nothing, but the reflection of its own littleness mirrored on the surfaces of things. He saw matter every-where ; he met no causal and providing mind.

“He sends out his moral sense to seek the legislating conscience which is justice in what is right, the ground of good, and the altogether beautiful to the moral sense, the equitable will which rules the world. But his moral sense returns silent, alone, and empty ; there is no equitable will, no altogether beautiful of moral excellence, no ground of good, no conscience which enacts justice into an unchanging law of right ; there is only the finite will of man, often erring and always feeble, man an animated and self-conscious drop of dew in the Sahara of the world, conscious of desire of will, but of such feebleness that soon he will exhale into thin air, and be no more a drop in all the world—will evaporate into nothing. Every-where



is material fate, material chance : spiritual order, spiritual providence—that is a dream.

“He sends out his affections on the same quest, seeking his heart’s desire. They have grown strong by love of nature—the crystal, the plant, and animal; they have been educated by loving man—parent and friend, and wife and child, and all mankind; refined by loving noble men, who attract ingenuous youth as loadstones draw the iron dust. Now his affections fly forth with trembling wing, and seek the all-perfect ideal, the object of their love, to stay the hunger of the heart which craves the infinite to feed upon and love. But the affections also come back to the sad man with no return. ‘There is naught to love,’ say they; ‘nothing save man and the ideals of his heart; they are beautiful, but only bubbles; his warm breath fills them for a moment; how fair they shine—they cool, they perish, and are not! The breath was but a part of the windy cheat which blows along the world—the bubble breaks, and is nothing. There are only finite things for you to love; only finite things to love you in return.’ He presses the frail object of his affection closer and closer to his heart. ‘This, at least,’ say I, ‘is secure, and is a fact—the dear one is a reality, and not a dream.’ Still there is a sadness in my eye, whence speaks the unrest and wasting of the heart which longs for the unchangeable lovely. Death comes down to separate me from the best beloved. Beauty forsakes the elemental clod, the lip is cold; the heart is still; the eye—its lovely light all quenched and gone. Where is the mind which once spoke to me in hand and lip; the affection which loved me, finding its delight in loving, serving, and in being loved? It is nothing, all gone—like the rainbow of yesterday, no trace thereof still lingering on the sky. ‘But what!’ say I. ‘Is there nothing for me to love which will not pass away?’ ‘No; love gravitation if you like—cohesion, the primary qual-

ities of matter; naught else abides.' I look up, and an ugly force is there, alien to my mind, foreign to my conscience, and hurtful to my heart, and wantonly strikes down the one I valued more than self, and sought to defend with my own bosom; then I die, I stiffen into rigid death. So the heathen fable tells that Niobe clung to her children with warding arms, while the envious deities shot child after child, daughters and fair sons, till the twelve were slain, and the mother, all powerless to defend her own, herself became a stone!

"Last hope of all, as first not least of all, the atheist sends out his soul to seek its rest and bring back tidings of great joy. Throughout the vast inane it flies, feeling the darkness with its wings, seeking the soul of all, which at once is reason, conscience, and the heart of all that is, which will give satisfaction to the various needs of each. But the soul likewise comes back, empty and alone, to say, 'There is no God; the universe is a disorder; man is a confusion; there is no infinite, no reason, no conscience, no heart, no soul of things. There is naught to reverence, to esteem, to worship, to love, to trust in, nothing which in turn loves us, with all its universal force. I am but a worm on the hot sand of the world, seeking to fly, but it is only the instinct of wings I feel; striving to walk, but handless and without a foot; essaying then to crawl, so it be only up. But there is not a blade of grass to hold on to and climb up by, not a weed to shelter me in the intolerable heat of life.'

"Thus left alone I look on the ground, and it seems cruel—a mother that devours her young. No voice cries thence to comfort me; it is a force, but nothing more. Its history tells of tumult, confusion, and continual change; it prophesies no future peace, tells of no plan in the confusion. I look up to the sky, there looks not back again a kind providence to smile upon me with a thousand starry eyes, and bless me with the



sun's ambrosial light. In the storms a vengeful violence, with its lightning sword, stabs into darkness, seeking for murderable men.

“There is no providence, only capricious, senseless fate. Here is the marble of human nature; the atheist would pile it up into palace or common dwelling, but there is only the fleeting sand to build upon, which the rains wash away, or the winds blow off; nowhere is there eternal rock to hold his building up. No, he has not daily bread—nothing to satisfy the hunger of his mind, his conscience, and his heart, the famine of his soul, only the cold, thin atmosphere of fancy. Does he believe in immortality—it is an immortality of fear, of doubt, of dread. Experience tells him of the history of mankind, a sad history, it seems—a record of war and want, of oppression and servility. He sees that pride elbows misery into the kennel, and is honored for the merciless act; that tyrants tread the nations underfoot, while some patriot pines to oblivion and death; he sees no prophecy of better things. How can he in an earth without a heaven, in a soul without a body, a world without a God?

“Atheism sits down on the shores of time; the stream of human history rolls by, bearing successively, as bubbles on its bosom, the Egyptian civilization, and it passes slowly by with its myriads of millions, and that bubble breaks; the Hebrew, Chaldean, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Christian civilization, and they pass by as other bubbles, with their many myriads of millions multiplied by myriads of millions. Their sorrows are all ended; they were sorrows for nothing. The tears which furrowed the cheek, the unrequited heroism, the virtue unrewarded—they have perished, and there is no compensation; because it is a body without a soul, an earth without a heaven, a world without a God. ‘Does not that content you?’ asks our atheist.

“No man can ever be content with that. Few men ever come to it,

Thanks to the human heart by which we live!

Human nature stops a great way this side of that.

“I am not a cowardly man; but if I were convinced there was no God, my courage would drop as water, and be no more. I am not an unhopeful man; there are few men who hope so much; I never despair of truth, of justice, of love, and piety; I know man will triumph over matter, the people over tyrants, right over wrong, truth over falsehood, love over hate. I always expect defeat to-day, but I am sure of triumph at the last; and with truth on my side, justice on my side, love on my side, I should not fear to stand in a minority of one against the whole population of this whole globe of lands. I would bow and say to them, ‘I am the stronger; you may glory now, but I shall conquer you at last.’ Such hope have I for man here and hereafter, that the wickedest of sinners, I trust, God will bring face to face with the best of men, his sins wiped clean off, and together they shall sit down at the table of the Lord, in the kingdom of God. But take away my consciousness of God, and I have no hope; none for myself, none for you, none for mankind. If no mind in the universe were greater than Humboldt’s; no ruler wiser than presidents, and kings, and senates, and congresses; if there were no appeal from the statutes of men to the laws of God; from present misery to future eternal triumph on earth or in heaven—then I should have no hope. But I know that the universe is insured at the office of the infinite God, and no particle of matter, no particle of mind, shall ever suffer ultimate shipwreck in this vast voyage of mortal and immortal life.

“I am not a sad man. Spite of the experience of life, somewhat bitter, I am a cheerful, and a joyous, and a happy man. But take away my consciousness of God; let me believe there is



no infinite God; no infinite mind which thought the world into existence, and thinks it into continuance; no infinite conscience which everlastingly enacts the eternal laws of the universe; no infinite affection which loves the world; loves Abel and Cain—loves the drunkard's wife and the drunkard; the mayors and aldermen who made the drunkard; which loves the victim of the tyrant and loves the tyrant; loves the slave and his master; loves the murdered and the murderer; the fugitive and the kidnapper publicly griping his price of blood—the third part of Iscariot's pay—and then secretly taking his anonymous revenge, stealthily calumniating some friend of humanity; convince me that there is no God who watches over the nation, but 'forsaken Israel wanders lone;' that the sad people of Europe, Africa, America, have no guardian—then I should be sadder than Egyptian night! My life would be only the shadow of a dimple on the bottom of a little brook—whirling and passing away; all the joy I have in the daily business of the world, in literature and science and art, in the friendships and wide philanthropies of the time, would perish at once—borne down in the rush of waters and lost in their headlong noise. Yes, I should die in uncontrollable anguish and despair.

“A realizing sense of atheism, a realizing sense of the consequences of atheism—that would separate our nature, and we should give up the ghost; and the elements of the body would go back to the elements of the earth. But—God be thanked!—the foundation of religion is too deep within us. There is a great cry through all creation for the living God! Thanks to him, the evidence of God has been plowed into nature so deeply, and so deeply woven into the texture of the human soul, that very few men call themselves atheists in this sense. No man ever willingly came to this conclusion: no man; no, not one! Those men who have arrived at this conclusion—

we should cast no scorn at them; we should give them our sympathy; a friendly heart, and the most affectionate and tender treatment of their soul.

“Religion is natural to man. Instinctively we turn to God, reverence him, and rely on him. And when reason becomes powerful—when all the spiritual faculties get enlarged, and we know how to see the true, to will the just, to love the beautiful, and to live the holy—then our idea of God rises higher and higher, as the child’s voice changes from the baby’s treble pipe to the dignity of manly speech. Then the feeble, provisional ideas of God which were formed at first, pass by us; the true idea of God gets written in our soul, complete beauty drives out partial ugliness, and perfect love casts out all partial fear.” \*

*In summing up the whole argument for divine existence* we must be astonished that doubt could ever arise in any human mind. I am sure no one who has read the foregoing pages will accuse us of having made a special plea. We have neither concealed embarrassing facts nor exaggerated proofs. No difficulty has been evaded or understated. There has been no appeal to either prejudice or passion. Reason has neither been ignored nor overslaughed. We have not aimed at victory, but have simply desired to attain truth. What is the result? The problem we have sought to solve is: “Is there rational ground for believing in the existence of a Being of infinite perfection, who is the maker and governor of the universe?”

We have examined the several answers that have been made to the question: the answer of agnosticism; the answer of polytheism; the answer of atheism; the answer of pantheism; the answer of theism.

We have shown that atheism is a mere denial, without show of grounds upon which it can rationally stand. It accounts for

\* Theodore Parker: “Sermons of Theism—Speculative Atheism,” pp. 9-34.



nothing. It relieves no difficulty. It meets no demand of the reason or the affections. It serves no end of good. It escapes no embarrassment or perplexity of the understanding. It has nothing to commend it as a theory either to the intelligence or feelings of man. It is wholly illicit and irrational, and finds no standing ground in man except in the moral degeneracy of his nature. That alone which demands it and is content with it is sin and dread of retribution. All its implications are destructive. It abolishes moral law. It destroys all sense of responsibility. It makes conscience an impertinence. It outrages reason by denying that there is any design in the universe and by affirming that it displays no end of either wisdom or goodness. Its two extremes are: "There is no God—death is an eternal sleep." To the question, Whence came the universe? it answers, It is eternal or accidental. To the question, What exists? it replies, Matter. To the question, Why does matter assume the form and relations which appear? it replies, Either they are eternal, or they are accidental, or they emerge from inhering forces by some unknown mode of interaction. To the question, Is there a purpose in any thing? it replies, There is no such thing in nature. To the question, Was the eye made for vision, or the ear for hearing, or the stomach for food, or food for nutriment, or the earth to sustain life? it replies, Nothing was made to serve any end. To the question, Whence came life? it replies, From dead matter. To the question, Whence came mind? it replies, From unthinking matter. To the question, Whence came all organic forms? it replies, From purposeless elements of matter. To the question, What becomes of mind? it replies, It returns to matter. When asked for the reason for this marvelous faith, it is able to assign none that is not in contradiction to all the laws of reason. It admits that a Cuban hoe or Indian arrow-head requires a mind to purpose and think it before it can exist—that there is no

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house without a builder, no work of art without an artist, no contrivance without a contriver; that all these presuppose mind, purpose, and a free cause; but it denies these for the earth and sky, and all the marvelous contrivances and adaptations found therein! To state the theory is to refute it.

How is it with theism? Theism, as an historic form of thought, is far from being universal or co-extensive with religious sentiments. Indeed, it is quite limited and circumscribed. The race, starting with this idea, soon lost it, or merged it in corruptions of various kinds. It has retained possession of but a small portion of the race. "There are," says Flint, "but three theistic religions—the Mosaic, the Christian, and the Mohammedan. They are connected historically in the closest manner—the idea of God having been transmitted to the two latter, and not independently originated by them. All other religions are polytheistic or pantheistic, or both together. Among those who have been educated in any of these heathen religions only a few minds of rare penetration and power have been able to rise by their own exertions to a consistent theistic belief. The God of all those among us who believe in any God, even of those who reject all revelation, is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or some corruption of that idea. From these ancient Jewish fathers the knowledge of him has historically descended through an unbroken succession of generations to us. We have inherited it from them. If it had not thus come down to us—if we had not been born into a society pervaded by it—there is no reason to suppose that we should have found it out for ourselves, and still less that we should merely have been required to open our eyes in order to see it. Rousseau only showed how imperfectly he realized the dependence of man on man, and the extent to which tradition enters into all our thinking, when he pretends that a human being born on a desert island, and who had grown up without

2



any acquaintance with other beings, would naturally and without other assistance rise to the apprehension of this great thought. The Koran well expresses a view which has been widely held when it says, 'Every child is born into the religion of nature ; its parents make it a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian.' The view is, however, not a true one. The child is born, not into the religion of nature, but into blank ignorance ; and, left entirely to itself, it would probably never find out as much religious truth as the most ignorant of parents can teach it. It is doubtless better to be born into the most barbarous pagan society than it would be to be born on a desert island and abandoned to find out a religion for one's self." \*

The most ancient form of theism is Judaism, or more properly patriarchalism older than Judaism. There is reason to believe that it is traceable to a revelation as ancient as the race itself. Christianity received it direct from the Jewish system. Its founder was in the line of its great teachers—himself the greatest of all the prophets and the fulfillment of all their predictions. He did not vacate their teachings, but added to them. Mohammedanism is a corruption of these systems, adding human fables which deprive of its virtue the theism retained.

The effect of theism must be judged by the Jewish and Christian systems, as compared with other forms of thought, and as seen in the Jewish nation and those nations which have embraced Christianity compared with other nations and peoples, but this comparison does not alone form a perfect basis of judgment, or proper test of the merits of the theory. The true test is, the effects of the theory were it universally accepted and incorporated into the actual life of the world. This would determine its merits.

What, then (we raise the question) would be the effect on

\* "Theism," pp. 19, 20.

the world were theism embraced and practiced by all men? What is theism? It is the doctrine that there is one personal God of infinite wisdom, power, and eternity, by whom the universe was created and is governed.

In its highest form, it is that this one eternal God of infinite power and wisdom, the Creator and Governor of the world, is also a being of infinite goodness, ordering all things in the interests of righteousness and holy happiness; that to this end he ordains laws for the government of free beings, obedience to which is required, and, when rendered, are such as will issue in the highest welfare of the dutiful subject, who is also a child. These laws are enforced by sanctions which are both merciful and just.

Now the question is, What would be the influence on the world were this theory universally adopted and given a governing place in human affairs? Can there be any doubt that it would be ennobling—that it would lift the world along all the lines of welfare—that it would dignify humanity—that it would elevate its aims and aspirations—that it would give sacredness and beauty to life—that it would put to shame the most serious evils that infest our nature—that it would spread happiness and diffuse hope—that under its genial but invigorating and inspiring sway it would bear humanity onward and upward to the best conditions for time, and, if there be an immortality awaiting it, that it is the surest guide to the highest bliss of the future? There is nobody in the world who can intelligently doubt this. Those who deride as well as those who embrace the theory believe this. True or false, theism points the way to human welfare. It is the faith which promises most for man. It is the palladium of virtue.

Let it prevail, what will it make of the world if allowed its legitimate influence? In the case of atheism, we have seen what

Effects of the-  
ism were it  
universally ac-  
cepted.



the effect would be. We now raise the question, What would it be in the case of theism? The supposition is the same as in the other case; that is, that the theory absolutely prevails—has full and perfect sway. As was supposed in the other case, it is accepted as true—the whole world embraces it. There is a God, holy, just, and good. He is sovereign. His will is law. Man is immortal. He is a soul. He is not a beast. He is God's child. He is held to the obligation of virtue. He must give an account hereafter for every act and thought by an eternal law. The eternal law requires goodness, charity, love, purity, piety, worship. The race is a sacred race, and all are brothers—children of one Father under this faith.

The answer to the question as to the effect of such a system is imperfectly seen in any actual case: for in no case has the legitimate effect been reached. The theory has never fully prevailed in any place or time. We must judge of it from the intimation merely. That under such a system, universally accepted and faithfully practiced, every human being would have the best opportunity to reach the most perfect condition of welfare possible, no one can doubt. There would be restraints and self-denials, but only those which work for the individual elevation and the general good—only such as draw the line between a noble and a beastly life. Out of its principles and teachings would spring industries and habits of self-culture that would bring forth all the wealth of the world for the enjoyment and beatification of man, and for the refinement of his tastes and culture of his affections. Home would grow in purity. Parents would love their children. Children would honor their parents. Men would value their fellow-men. These would be natural and legitimate fruits of the system. In proportion as the principle is accepted and practiced that must be the result. All history is in proof. The contrast between those nations and individuals

2

who have imperfectly held it and those who have been without it is in evidence. Reason emphasizes it.

Look abroad over the world, in past ages and to-day; what do you behold? Where is darkness, where is sorrow, where is hopelessness and despair? Is it under theism?

Is there nothing of significance in these facts? Is it a matter of indifference which theory we accept? These contrasts are not accidental. Atheism is death. The knowledge of the true God brings with it life and peace.

In closing this discussion we beg the reader to think again of the wonderful truth which has been fairly established by every possible kind and measure of proof; that is, that "there is an eternal Father at the head of the universe." What majesty there is in the thought! Consider the greatness of the ineffable One!

The infinite must necessarily forever transcend the grasp of the finite. We cannot by wisdom find out God, in the sense of comprehending him, but we are able to know that he is, and find out something of his perfections and ways. He is chiefly seen in his works, but his word declares his perfections and gives an account of his ways. Two or three things kept in memory will greatly aid us to the avoidance of vague thoughts, which are the bane of all minds. When we approach the infinite we become bewildered, and we are prone to give ourselves to dumb wonder. Our thoughts become unintelligible. For the better appreciation of the subject, things to be remembered are: First, God is a real being; he exists; he is a person. In essential respects he is such a being as we are. He has knowledge, he has power, he exercises will, he acts intelligently. He differs from us in that he always existed and is absolutely independent, immutable, illimitable, and self-determining. Second, it must be remembered that whatever exists does so because he made it. The universe has nothing

2



that is not derived from him. He established its order. He sustains it. His arm created and upholds it entire.

With these things in mind, not dimly or as conjectures, but vividly and as realities, let us try to apprehend God through his works.

We measure a being by what he does or can do. This is our only way of reaching an idea of the greatness of a being. The artist is known by his work, the inventor by his skill, the athlete by his agility and power, the philosopher by his wisdom, man by what he brings to pass, God by the universe which he has made and governs.

What is the universe? We do not know. It transcends us, but we know in part; "parts of his ways" we see, but the remainder is past finding out. But of that which we do know, how shall we grasp it? For a moment think of its extent.

Vast as the universe seems to the eye, one acquires no proximate idea simply by the visual survey. We must be at the pains to study, in some measure to master, Extent of the universe in space. magnitudes, distances, and motions of celestial bodies as they have become known to us through telescopic power. We must, in order to this, become vividly acquainted with our own cluster of worlds; and then, with it as a measure, pass outward to the survey and conception of the systems about us. Mere mastery of figures and word statements will not put us in possession of an idea of the reality. We must try to get the magnitude of our earth and its economy of motion fully in our minds, and then, taking it as a measure, approach the sun, and endeavor to realize what it means when we are informed that it is 1,300,000 times as large as our earth. We must then arrange in our thought the relation of our sister planets to this body, in their relative distances, beginning with Vulcan at 15,000,000 miles away from the center, and terminating with Neptune, 3,000,000,000 miles

off. We must try to comprehend these enormous distances by taking some rate of motion as our guide, such as the common rate of railroad travel, say thirty-eight miles an hour, or 1,000,000 in three years. Then think of a locomotive running without cessation nine thousand years to pass over that space to Neptune. Then we must try to master the thought that the nearest of the fixed stars—and all that we see are such, except five or six of the planets visible without instruments—is, say, 20,000,000,000,000 miles away from our solar orbit. That is the lowest estimate given. To get some idea of the distance we must return to our scale of measurement, the common speed of the locomotive. We have as the result, that it would require 60,000,000 years to pass from our sun to its nearest sidereal neighbor. Let us next try to grasp the thought that there are about six thousand of these within the range of unaided vision, about equidistant from each other, and each of these probably sustaining the same relation to planets which our sun does to us, the remotest of which from us would require our locomotive not less than 720,000,000 years to reach. Let us then put to our eye the greatest telescopic power known, and push out our line of observation 2,000 times further, and bring within view 500,000,000 more solar centers, the remotest of which would require our locomotive 1,440,000,000,000 years to reach. Let us then remember that we know that we have not exhausted the universe, perhaps have only touched an infinitesimal part of it. We must dwell upon it until our minds take it in! This is one aspect of the work of the Almighty.

If now we turn our thought in the direction of the almost infinite duration of time during which this great work has been progressing, we gain another view of the Extent of the universe in time. operation of the almighty Cause. Let us dismiss from our minds the old fable, that this mighty work is either recent or sudden. We may as well accept the probable re-



sults of scientific inquiry. They are proximately correct. They furnish us two plummets by which to explore the almost infinite past of creation's work. If we take the geologic scale, we pass down through cycles we know not how great, but certainly millions of years, to the dawn of life. Then plunging down deeper through the azoic formations, and to the beginning of a solid refrigerated surface of the globe, we must count many millions more of solar years. But now, if we take the solar scale, and measure backward from the fitting up of the system according to the nebular hypothesis, these geologic eons are but the days of creation. First came that time when Neptune, eldest-born of the planets, was loosened from the solar mass. Then those immeasurable ages when the mass had shrunk up to the orbit of Uranus, and that planet was thrown from its rim to take its place in the planetary spaces; then again those countless ages when the solar mass had shrunk to the orbit of Herschel, and that planet was born, and so on down through till Vulcan, youngest of the solar offspring, took his place in the group of our planetary kinsmen. What imagination can fathom the depths of time consumed by the mighty evolutions?

Then if we consider the motions and harmonies pervading all these systems, and all their economies of life, we begin to obtain a faint conception of the problem before us: the quality and character of that infinite Being who has evolved it. Its vastness displays his power. Its adjustment displays his wisdom. Its permanence displays his inexhaustible energy. Its life proclaims his immanence.

So long as reason occupies the throne it is impossible that we should doubt the reality of the eternal power which underlies all, and as impossible that we should doubt that the power is the servant of thought. It is intuitively certain that power culminating in such a product is exerted and guided by

wisdom. It is certain that it is free and volitional—it is the power of a will exerted under the direction of infinite intelligence. It is infinite power; that is, power adequate to any effect which infinite intelligence can dictate. The universe was built and is sustained and governed by One who comprehends it in its entirety from beginning to end. It is certain that it primarily existed in its cause as pure thought before it had any reality. The ideal pattern was that after which it is built and ordered. Nothing is in the reality that was not in the archetype. He that thought it is the same who built, and who forever orders and sustains it. The thought and its realization are identical. His will puts reality into his idea.

The thesis requires us to think him originally alone in those awful depths of eternity, with the sublimities of the universe, as it was to be forever, in his consciousness; all that has been in past cosmic eons, all that will be as eternity unrolls its ever-widening wonders, all of material magnificence, perhaps still increasing and to increase as the ages come and go; all of spiritual glory in the ever-growing knowledge of immortal minds, all that shall ever be within the areas of immeasurable space and embrace of endless duration—all was in him as thought and purpose from the beginning—yea, from before all beginnings. The universe will forever but proclaim him “by whom and for whom” it was built, and will forever be building—the eternal God. To see it is to see Him whose shadow it is. In itself it is nothing. That which is, the “I AM,” stands behind it, and holds it up as the dim reflection of himself—who only has being in himself.

There are some things which may be said to be known, or otherwise the term knowledge has no meaning, and all reasoning is void. Among these are: First, man knows himself as existing. Second, man knows the external world as existing. Third, man knows that the present order of things,



himself included, did not always exist. Fourth, man knows that whatever had a beginning must have a cause. Fifth, man knows that the cause must have existed antecedently to the effect which it produced. Sixth, man knows that that which is cause of all effects cannot itself be an effect. Seventh, man knows that that which is, and which is not an effect of any cause, must itself be eternal, and sole cause of all things which have had a beginning. Eighth, man knows that whatever is contained in all effects was potentially in the ineffable cause before it appeared in effect. Thus from the things which are known, by a law of reason, we are compelled to affirm the existence of an eternal, all-powerful, and infinitely wise God, who is the free personal cause of whatever exists in time, himself only being eternal and underived. The proof is absolute, and must stand while reason holds its throne.

It is the immeasurable vastness of the truth that bewilders us and gives rise to uncertainty. It transcends us—its margins lie in the obscurities of the infinite—we cannot grasp it—the mystery confuses us; but reason never falters in its testimony. Amid the universal acclaim only one dissenting voice is heard: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” He repeats it until he makes himself believe it. Putting out his eyes, he ceases to be able to see. That which to all others is open as day to him is closed as by the darkest night. Meantime, all things that have being publish their Maker. There is not an atom that is not vocal of his praise—the minutest grain equally with the mightiest orb, the microscopic cell no less than the most elaborate organism. Creation from base to finial, from center to circumference, throughout all its realms, joins in the ceaseless pæan, swelling in cadences which fill immensity, and will break forever along the shores of eternity, declarative of his power and glory. And if these dumb things testify of him,

what shall be said of the angelic hosts who forever stand before him and behold the splendor of his effulgence and commune with the unfolding wonders of his thought and love? Well may they sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Rev. xv, 3.

"The spacious firmament on high,  
With all the blue ethereal sky,  
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,  
Their great Original proclaim:  
The unwearied sun, from day to day,  
Does his Creator's power display,  
And publishes to every land  
The work of an almighty hand.

"Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,  
And nightly, to the listening earth,  
Repeats the story of her birth;  
While all the stars that round her burn,  
And all the planets in their turn,  
Confirm the tidings as they roll,  
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

"What though in solemn silence all  
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?  
What though no real voice nor sound  
Amid the radiant orbs be found?  
In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice;  
Forever singing as they shine,  
'The hand that made us is divine.'"—ADDISON.





## A P P E N D I X.

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NOTE A. See page 247.

It must be true that the Almighty Creator of the universe is morally responsible for his work. Freely and with perfect foresight of all its consequences he launched it into being. There was no extrinsic agency to necessitate his act. It could have nothing that he did not put in it. But for his voluntary fiat it had never been. He knew what he was doing. There were no concealed or uncomprehended powers imparted. There were no possible outcomes which he did not discern. He did precisely what he meant to do.

Is it said then he is responsible for the evil that is in the universe? If it can be shown that there is any evil in any part of his plan or work, either as included or as necessarily emanating from it as consequence, then Yes. For whatever of such evil exists or can be adduced as necessarily growing out of his work, he must stand as responsible cause. It must harmonize with his righteousness or convict him of unrighteousness.

But what are the evils which are included in his plan or which necessarily flow from it? Is it an evil that his works are finite? Is it possible to Omnipotence to have made them otherwise? Is it an evil that death preys on the realm of life? Where is the proof that the present order of a succession of generations is not the best possible? Is pain an evil? Who knows that it is not a ministry necessary to the highest good of the universe, or an incident inevitable to the most beneficent economy, or that the same provisions which make it possible are not necessary parts of a scheme which works for the greatest variety and highest reaches of enjoyment? Who is able to criticise the organic arrangements of the living creation and decide that it was possible to



Omniscience and Omnipotence to have done better, or that it would have been higher goodness, in the absence of such power, not to have done at all?

But it is said there is the evil of sin and of eternal pains and penalties. What is sin? A violation of God's laws for the government of moral beings. Who is it that violates these laws? Man? Then man is the cause of sin. Is God responsible for man's act? If there is evil in it is He the author? Is not the evil simply the abuse of his good?

But is it said that he is the author of the penalties of sin, and these are the greatest evils of all? Were the penalties instituted for good or evil? What did he mean by them, evil or good? Do they exist at all except as conserving good: as necessary exponents of his eternal hate, not of any creature he has made, but of the sin which forever antagonizes and subverts the good he planned for? What relation does he sustain to the evil, except that of forbidding it, hating it, expressing displeasure with it? It is in his universe not by his act, not by his consent, not as necessary consequence of any thing he has done, but absolutely against his will and express command. All his power is arrayed against it. Was it an evil that he made it possible, by creating an order of beings who could originate it? Would it have been wise and good to forego heaven lest some would prove unworthy of it? to prevent the possibility of virtue and its rewards, lest some would forfeit them?



NOTE B. See page 251.

The argument is thus put by another, I think Dove, but unfortunately cannot give the reference:

1. Positive existence is possible, for it involves no contradiction.
2. All possible existence is either *necessary*, which must be and in its own nature cannot but be; or *contingent*, which may be or may not be, for in neither case is a contradiction involved.
3. *Some* existence is *necessary*; for if all existence were contingent, all existence might not be as well as might be; and that

thing which might not be never could be without some other thing as the prior cause of its existence, since every effect must have a cause. If, therefore, all possible existence were contingent, all existence would be impossible; because the idea or conception of it would be that of an effect without a cause, which involves a contradiction.

4. Necessary existence must be *actual* existence; for necessary existence is that which must be, and cannot but be; that is, it is such existence as arises from the nature of the thing in itself; and it is an evident contradiction to affirm that necessary existence might not be.

5. Necessary existence being such as must be and cannot but be, it must *always* be, and cannot but be always; for to suppose that necessary existence could begin to be, or could cease to be, that is, that a time might be in which necessary existence would not be, involves a contradiction. Therefore necessary existence is without beginning and without end; that is, it is *eternal*.

6. Necessary existence must be *wherever* any existence is possible; for all existence is either contingent or necessary: all contingent existence is impossible without necessary existence being previously, as its cause: and wherever existence is possible, it must be either of a necessary or of a contingent being. Therefore necessary existence must be wherever existence is possible; that is, it must be *infinite*.

7. There can be but *one* necessarily existent being; for two necessarily existent beings could in no respect whatever differ from each other; that is, they would be one and the same being.

8. The one necessarily existent being must have *all possible perfections*; for all possible perfections must be the perfection of some one existence. All existence is either necessary or contingent; all contingent existence is dependent upon necessary existence; consequently all possible perfections must belong either to necessary existence or to contingent existence; that is, to contingent beings, which are caused by and are dependent upon necessary being. Therefore, since there can be but *one* necessarily existent being, that Being must have all possible perfections.

9. The one necessarily existent Being must be a *free agent*; for



contingent existence is possible, as the conception of it involves no contradiction, but necessary existence must be the cause or producing agent of contingent existence; otherwise contingent existence would be impossible, as an effect without a cause; and necessary existence as the cause of contingent existence does not act necessarily, for then contingent existence would itself be necessary; which is absurd, as involving a contradiction. Therefore necessary existence, as the cause of contingent existence, acts not *necessarily* but *freely*, that is, is a *free agent*, which is the same thing as being an *intelligent agent*.

10. Therefore there is one necessarily existent Being, the cause of all contingent existence; that is, of all other existence besides himself; and this Being is eternal, infinite, possessed of all possible perfections, and is an intelligent free agent; that is, *this Being* is God.

#### SCHOLIUM.

If it should be objected to the conclusion that the one necessarily existent, eternal, and infinite being is matter, the assertion would be thus refuted:

1. The *vis inertiae* is an essential property of matter; that is, matter cannot change its present state of either rest or motion without the impulse or force, or in some way the action of some agent possessed of power.

2. As matter thus depends on some other being for all motion, action, and power of action, it cannot be necessarily existent (= it can have only contingent existence).

3. Also, as matter, on account of its essential property of *inertia*, cannot change its state of either rest or motion without the accession of another active power, it cannot be properly an agent, least of all a free agent.

4. Therefore matter cannot be the one necessarily existent being, which is proved to be possessed of all possible perfections and to be an intelligent free agent.

Prop. 3. To prove the existence of God from the *position of sufficient causes*: which is also an *a priori* argument.

Sol. 1. Something must have existed in all past extent of time; that is, from a past eternity, a period of duration having no

beginning. An assertion equivalent to this—there never was a time when nothing existed.

Had a time ever been in which nothing existed, nothing ever could have existed; for, supposing what is here denied, there would have been no cause sufficient for the production of any existence. *Nothing* cannot be a cause. Whatever *is* a cause must be *something*. But we are sure that something does exist.

To say that the universe of existent beings rose out of total and absolute nihility, and then, of course, without any cause of its existence, is contrary to the first principles of human knowledge; a sane mind cannot receive it. It includes utter incompatibility. The mind recoils at the proposition with a reluctance which cannot be overcome—with that immediate and unavoidable impossibility of assent which is the ultimate and strongest evidence of falsehood.

2. There cannot have been a *succession* of finite dependent beings from the past eternity.

Such an infinite series of dependent beings cannot be *necessary*, since every individual in the series is *dependent* on the foregoing; all the parts taken distinctly are contingent; and when no part is necessary, no number of parts can be necessary, nor can the whole be so. It has no cause of existence out of itself, by the hypothesis, and because it includes within itself all things that are or ever were. Neither has it any cause of existence within itself, as we have seen that it is not necessary.

Since, then, such an infinite series has neither necessity nor cause, nor any reason whatsoever for its existence, it is a contradiction and an impossibility.

3. Since, therefore, something has existed from all eternity, and that which has thus existed cannot have been an endless series of finite, dependent, and changing beings, it must have been an unchangeable and independent Being.

4. That unchangeable and independent Being which has existed from all eternity, and which therefore can have no external cause of its existence, must so exist by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing itself. It is *necessarily* existent, or, in other words, self-existent.



5. The uncaused, independent, eternal, and self-existent Being must be also *infinite*; because the necessity of its existence, being absolute in itself, and not depending on any outward cause, must be *every-where* as well as *always* unalterably the same.

6. It is, moreover, reasonable to conclude that this eternal, infinite, and self-existent Being can be but *one*; because all variety or difference of existence must be dependent on some external cause, and therefore cannot be necessarily existing. Whatever there is necessarily existing is the simple *essence* of self-existent Being; that is, it is *one*.

7. That the one self-existent Being, the original cause of all other beings, must be *intelligent* may be proved *a posteriori*, from the order of causes and effects, from the *vis inertiae* of matter, from the intelligent and voluntary faculties which are bestowed upon created and dependent beings, and from the innumerable marks of design, adaptation, skill, and wisdom observable in the world around us.

Therefore there is one self-existent, eternal, infinite, and intelligent Being; which is equivalent to saying there is a God.

# INDEX.

- Abiology, a type of the universe, 64.  
 Absolute, intelligence of, 93; defined, 238; Mansel's definition, 291-295; first cause, absolute being, 291.  
 Absurdities of materialism, 68; of atheism, 83.  
 Accidental intelligence of universe, 67.  
 Adam, his religious opportunities, 386, 387.  
 Adaptation, implies mind, 115.  
 Addison's "Voice of Nature," 443.  
 Adjustment of matter, proof of God, 90.  
 Age, the present, thoughtful and earnest, 16.  
 Agnostic objection to personality, 288, 289.  
 Agnosticism, 28-34: its representatives, 28; its theory and results, 29; based on Hume, 29; includes disbelief in God and man, 29; its view of consciousness, 30; of reality, 30; contains truth, 31; its error, 32; counterfeits truth, 32; is practically atheism, 32; Momerie's view of, 33, 34; essence of, 33.  
 Agnostics desire God, 9-12.  
 Aim of investigation, 16.  
 Albertus Magnus, on knowing God, 147.  
 Amberley, Viscount, on the loss of unbelievers, 11.  
 Animal traits in man, 19.  
 Animalcules, size of, 297.  
 Antecedent, not cause, 180.  
 Anthropomorphism, 65.  
 Antitheism unsatisfactory, 24-26; arguments of, 191-226; Mill on first cause, 192.  
 Antitheistic theories, 28-109; agnosticism, 28-34; pantheism, 34-50; polytheism, 50-52; atheism, 52-110; obscurity of, 190; failure of, 191; evolution, 191; considered, 191-226.  
 Antitheists, 53.  
*A posteriori* arguments, 251-431: cosmological, 252-359; teleological, 359-371; moral, 372-380; from universal belief, 380-390; from influence of theories, 390-431.  
*A priori* argument for God, 446-450.  
 Aquosity and vitality, 317, 318.  
 Arguments of theism unanswered, viii.  
 Argyll, on cosmic changes, 276-279.  
 Arminian theory of divine goodness, 102.  
 Arnold, Matthew, an agnostic, 28.  
 Assaults on theism, 191; by Hume, Mill, Hamilton, Spencer, Mansel, and the evolutionists, 191; Mill on first cause, 192-204; by physicists, 205; by evolution, 298-359.  
 Assumptions of atomic theory, false, 79-83; eternity of force and atoms, 79-81; limitation of universe to matter and force, 81-83.  
 Atavism, 339.  
 Atheism, vi, vii; a periodical disease, 13; two varieties, 27; tendencies of, 28; the theory, 52-110; as a system, 52; a negation, 53, 54, 82; its postulate, 53; its genesis, 53; seven difficulties, 53, 54; Flint's definitions of, 54, 55; dogmatic, 55; skeptical, 55; critical, 55; practical, 55; amenable to reason, 55; has the burden of proof, 56; Chalmers on, 56-59; is antitheism, 56, 57; denial of God unreasonable, 60; must account for the universe, 60; quandary, 60, 61; on matter, 61; the atomic theory, 66-82; fails to account for universe, 82, 83; denies mind, 83; its denials, 83; Blackie on its difficulties, 83-86; stronghold of, 84; Shedd on its difficulties, 86-88; hypotheses of, 163; results of applied theory, 393; reign of atheism in France, 393-395; spread of, deplored, 395; removes restraint, 396-398; abolishes moral obligation, 397, 398; never fully tested, 399; atheistic world supposed, 399-411; God dethroned,



- 401; conscience cast out, 401; prayer abandoned, 401; immortality erased, 402; moral nature expunged, 402; on ideas, 403; on Bible, 403; animalism, 405-407; Richter's dream of Godless universe, 407-411; Parker on atheism, 411-431.
- Atheist, sad plight of, 53.
- Atomic change, laws of, 106; unintelligent, 106.
- Atomic theory [see also Force and Force theory], 66-72; state, 67; its alleged action, 68; produces life, 70; produces man, 71; evolves mind, 72; absurdity of, 73; objected to, 75-78; mistakes of, 78; false assumptions, 79-82, 308-310; disproved, 219, 220; Parker on, 413-416.
- Atoms, eternity of, 67, 235, 236; force-centers, 67; not eternal, 79; not unoriginated, 260.
- Attributes a quality of being, 122.
- Augustine, on knowing God, 148.
- Automatism, no merit, 104.
- Bain, on thought, 64.
- Beginning, implied by change, 89.
- Being, meaning of term, 120; known by attributes, 122.
- Belief, should be justified, 111.
- Beliefs, not always true, 380, 381.
- Berkeley, on idealism, 253.
- Bible, a revealer of God, 156, 157; of spiritual kingdom, 157.
- Biogenesis, 328.
- Bischoff, on pantheism, 38-40.
- Blackie, on atheism, 13, 83.
- Blasphemy of atheism, 39; of pantheism, 39.
- Bowne, on necessity, 108-110; works on theism, 162; on function of theistic theory, 244, 245.
- Brain, origin of, 72; secretes thought, 63, 72.
- "Bridgewater Treatises," 161.
- Brougham, on consciousness and causality, 177.
- Bruno, quoted by Tyndall, 62.
- Büchner, on thought, 64.
- Calderwood, criticisms of Mansel, 295.
- Calvinist theory of evil, 102.
- Causality, idea of unshaken, 84; Hamilton on, 168; Hodge on, 168, 169; Wilberforce on, 169-172.
- Causation, not in matter, 89; eternal impossible, 93; term defined, 239; maxims concerning, 241-244.
- Cause, necessary to universe, 77; necessary to account for order, 84; proper, must be free, 95; philosophic doctrine of, 163; definition of cause, 164; effect defined, 164; force defined, 164; Hume's theory, 165; change produced by cause, 166; cause equal to effect, 167; Rousseau's view, 167, 168; Hamilton on, 168; Hodge on, 168, 169; has existence, 168; has power, 169; has sufficient power, 169; argument from consciousness, 169: first cause discussed, 169-226; Wilberforce on, 170-172; finality demanded, 170; cause a proof of an eternal Being, 171; true cause is a first cause, 171, 172; sequence not cause, 179; implies power, 180; the primary idea, 181, 182; Biran's theory of, 183, 184; criticised by Hamilton, 184; Mill's and Hume's objection, 184; theory reviewed, 185; implies rational will, 186; originates in mind, 187; physical causes misnamed, 187; import of causation, 188; Mill on first cause, 192-204; transcended by product, 203; Hume's declaration, 204; Hume's admission, 204; Hume's denials, 204; Diman's reply to Mill, 205-213; term defined, 237.
- Chalmers on unbelief, 56-59; on proof of divine existence, 90.
- Chambers, and evolution theory, 191.
- Chance theory, same as force theory, 75; as a theory of cosmos, 107.
- Change, implies beginning, 61, 74, 89; essential idea of, 96; of relation not necessarily change of being, 122; soon reaches ultimate, 213; questions concerning first change, 214; Mill's theory, 214; Mill's problem illustrated, 217; fallacy shown, 219-227; not eternal, 309.
- Changeable not eternal, 219, 220; not like, 220, 221.
- Character of investigators, 17.
- Christian, theory of God, 121; home advantage of, 136; the type of humanity, 154; theism, postulates of, 236; evolution, 330: theism, 434.
- Christianity in nineteenth century, 6; vitally attacked, 17; work of, 189; gains by battle, 190.

- Christlieb, on pantheism, 36.  
 Cicero, on human apprehension of God, 142.  
 Clarke, on Being of God, 172.  
 Clifford, on atheism, vii; on agnosticism, 11; on matter and mind, 62.  
 Companion, Clifford's great, vii, 11.  
 Comte, theology of, 9.  
 Conscience implies moral cause, 374-377, 379; witness to God, 389.  
 Consciousness, agnostic theory of, 30, 33; materialistic view, 62; Tyndall on, 64; meaning of, 227-229, 284-286.  
 Conscious-subject, defined, 227.  
 Conservation of energy, 66.  
 Conservation of force, 196, 197, 206.  
 Contradictions of materialism, 63.  
 Contrivance, implies thought and thinker, 115.  
 Corporeity of God excluded, 120.  
 Correlation of forces, 66.  
 Cosmic order, recent, 213, 214, 224.  
 Cosmological argument, 252-359; defined, 252; in Scripture, 252, 253; existence of cosmos, 253; cosmos not eternal, 255-264; purpose in, 265; personal cause necessary, 266; life, 267-276; transient life of matter, 270-279; mind essential, 279, 280; nebular hypothesis, 280-283; personal world-ground, 284-295; theories of life, 296-359; evolution theory, 298-359.  
 Cosmos, atheist theories of, 65; Mill's error concerning, 193; argument for, 253; extent and grandeur, 254; not eternal, 255-264; organic not eternal, 255-259; inorganic not eternal, 259-262; force not eternal, 262-264; geological argument, 264, 265; not self-created, 265; purpose in, 265; personal cause, 266, 267; life, how evolved, 267-269; mutations of life, 270-276; tendency to dissipation of force, 273-275; future of, 275; Winchell on changes in, 270-276; Argyll on changes in, 276-279; overruling mind essential, 279, 280; nebular hypothesis of, 280-283; personal agent in, 283; free self-existing cause, 283; Bowne on personal world-ground, 284-290; Mansel on absolute cause, 291-295; diversity of life, 296, 297; evolution, 298; being not merely power, 305; intelligent cause asserted, 359-371; evidence of design in, 356, 363; intelligence of designer, 363, 369; instances of design in, 365; produced by power working to an end, 366; force, divine activity, 367; materialistic theory of, 367, 368; Baden Powell on cosmic order, 368-370; thought in, 370; Newman on design in, 370, 371.  
 Cousin, on finite and infinite, 36; summary of pantheistic doctrine, 40; on cause, 182.  
 Crabbe, on existence of God, 8.  
 Creation, not allowed by pantheists, 37; Haeckel's views on, 55; and development incompatible, 86; difficulty of the idea, 91; not incomprehensible, 91; suggests eternal mind, 225; continual, 277, 278; and evolution complementary terms, 278; biblical account of, 312, 313; a new, 359.  
 Critical atheism, 55.  
 Crystalline force, 317, 320.  
 Cudworth's "Intellectual System of the Universe," 161.  
 Dallinger, biologist, 298.  
 Darwin, on origin of life, 301; on evolution, 302; on origin of species, 329.  
 Darwinism, Haeckel's Bible of, 64; fallacy of, 341, 342 [see Evolution].  
 Davy, Sir Humphry, on religious belief, 6.  
 Death, pantheistic view of, 38.  
 Definition of terms, in theistic theory, 226-240; mind, 227; Hamilton on mind as conscious-subject, 227-229; Hume on mind, 229, 230; matter, 230-234; force, 234-236; absolute, 237; infinite, 237; unconditioned, 237; cause, 237; final cause, 238; subject, 238; object, 238; eternity, 238; causation, 239; personal, 239; ontological, 239; ultimate, 239; evolution, 239.  
 Deification of self, 39; of evil, 39.  
 Deism, controversy over, 188.  
 Deity, not necessarily conceived good, 102.  
 Denial of God, unreasonable, 60.  
 Denials of atheism, 55.  
 Dependence, human sense of, 375; implies an independent being, 377-390; intuitive, 378.  
 Descartes, on ideas, 123.



- Design, no limitation, 289, 290; argument from, 359-371 [see Teleological argument]; terms explained, 360; Kant on, 361; Thomson on, 362; Hodge on intelligence of, 363-369; order in, 368-370; in material universe, 413.
- Desire of God, survives materialism, 9, 10, 11, 12.
- Deterioration of man, 153.
- Development and creation incompatible, 86.
- Development theory, Shedd on, 86; not irreligious, 311, 314.
- Difficulties alleged by atheists, 53; eternal being, 53; creative act, 54; immaterial being, 54; co-existent good and evil, 54; disbelief in the uncomprehended, 54; disbelief in free will and punishment, 54; the superstitions and mistakes of theologians, 54.
- Diman, on theistic argument, 113, 114; reply to Mill, 205-213; Mill's position restated, 205-208; thesis to be proved, 209; Locke on mind, 209; admissions of new theory, 210; on physiological psychology, 229.
- Disbelief amenable to reason, 55.
- Disorder alleged, 84; only seeming, 85.
- Disraeli on materialism, 14.
- Divergence, Darwin's law of, 339; limited, 341.
- Dogmatic atheism, 55.
- Doubt, new age of, v.
- Doubters, ignorant and honest, 5.
- Dove, on human groping for God, 152-154.
- Dualism, 64; Schleicher on, 66.
- Dwight, on atheism in France, 395; on government without God, 396-398.
- Earth, origin of, 69; future of, 273, 274.
- Earth's rotation, illustration of non-eternity, 258, 259.
- Effect, implies cause, 115; meaning of, 164; maxims concerning, 241, 242.
- Ego, a secretion of brain, 72; type of cause, 186; and non-ego, 285.
- Embryonic phenomena, 340, 343; considered, 346.
- Encyclopedists, materialism of French, 41.
- Energy, conservation of, 66; of will, not fore-knowledge, 183; dissipation of, 273; Thomson on, 274.
- Epicurus, on impression of God, 142.
- Equilibrium of forces, 273.
- Error may be propagated, 380, 381.
- Errors of materialism, 63, 64.
- Esthetic quality of universe, 98; of the Supreme Being, 99, 100.
- Eternal, the; cannot change, 74.
- Eternal Being, maxims concerning, 242-244; personal, 242; unchangeable, 242; moral, 243.
- Eternal mind suggested by creation, 225.
- Eternal source of all temporal things, 115.
- Eternal universe, impossible, 61.
- Eternity of mind or matter, 60; of motion and force, 66; of matter, 67; of atoms not proved, 79; of force not proved, 79; term defined, 238.
- Evil, deified by pantheism, 39.
- Evolution: Gladstone on, 13; fruit of, 67; implicates of, 87; cannot account for *new*, 88; argument from, 191; term defined, 239; theory of, 298-359; baseless, 298; Quatrefages on, 299; impossible, 299; unscientific, 299; being distinguished from power, 305; power goes with being, 306, 307; substance, 307; power implies choice, 308; plan implies mind, 311; popularity of theory, 312; McCosh on theory, 312, 313; Bible account of creation, 312; development not irreligious, 313, 314; age of, 315; Huxley on, 315-319; Tyndall on, 319, 320; Stebbing on, 320; theory restated, 321; Darwin's theory, 329, 330; materialistic, 330, 331; semi-materialistic, 331, 332, 333-359; Christian, 330, 332, 333; God the ultimate worker, 332; life his creation, 332; origin of life, 333; origin of vegetation, 334; origin of animal life, 334; of mollusks, 335; of vertebrates, 336; of mammals, 336; facts of, 337; law of variability, 337; struggle for existence, 337; natural selection, 338; "survival of fittest," 338; divergence, 339; atavism, 339; rudimental structure, 339; embryonic phenomena, 340, 345, 349; resemblances, 349; geological facts, 340, 346, 347; fallacy of Darwinian theory, 341, 342; no new species, 342; mental resemblances, 344; fallacies, 345-347; Whewell on, 348-350; decline not advance, 349, 350; Darwin's dream, 350; admitted, 351-354; does not

- dispose of first cause, 354; true law of, 354-359; self-development, 355; orderly nature of, 355, 356; unfolding of divine thought, 356; incomplete, 357; ultimate culminations, 358; a new creation, 359.
- Existence: of any being implies eternity of some being, 115; of God, evidence of, 160; proof possible and useful, 161; ability of disputants, 161; "being" assumed, 162; three suppositions concerning, 163; doctrine of cause, 163; maxims concerning, 241.
- Ex nihilo nihil fit*, 108.
- External world, how known, 130, 131.
- Extra-material personal agent in universe, 90.
- Failure of antitheistic writers, 111.
- Final cause, term defined, 238.
- Finality, demanded by cause theory, 170.
- Finite and infinite, pantheistic doctrine of, 36, 37.
- First cause: agnostic doctrine of, 30, 31; Flint on, 97; the God of Scripture, 121; intelligent, 115; deduced from causation idea, 169-172; by Wilberforce, 170-172; is an eternal Being, 171, 172; Clarke on, 172; Kant on, 172; is intelligent, 173-186; Brougham on, 177, 178; Reid on intelligence, 177; Morell on intelligence, 177; will-power in universe, 178, 179; Mill's argument discussed, 192-204; Diman's reply, 204-213; Diman's reply to Mill, 205-213; denied by physicists, 205; or assigned to force, 207; not important, 203, 208; Mill's position restated, 205-208; existence admitted by science, 210; mind or matter, 211; metaphysical concept of, 211; Hamilton on, 212; argument not to be abandoned, 213; Mill further discussed, 214-221; theistic doctrine unanswerable, 222; personal, 242; unexplained by evolution, 354.
- Fisher, on agnosticism, 29, 30; grounds of theistic and Christian belief, 162.
- Flint, on atheism, 54, 55; on first cause, 97; definition of theism, 110; on theistic theory, 110-113; on argument from universal belief, 390; on results of atheism, 395; on theistic religions, 433, 434.
- Force: in agnostic parlance, 30; a mode of motion, 66; materialistic definition of, 68; defined, 68; kinds of, 77; how evolved, 89; nature of, 164; natural, 173; mind, 174; not first cause, 195; conservation of, 197; persistent, 207; eternal, 208; a method of accounting for change, 210; considered, 234-236; merely a mode of existence, 234; relation to atoms, 234; originates in mind, 235, 236; a mode of divine activity, 366, 367.
- Force-centers, 67; not eternal, 79.
- Force theory [see Force, and Atomic theory], 66-73; identical with motion theory, 65; explained, 67; its absurdities, 68; its workings, 68-73; inorganic matter, 68, 69; life, 70; main, 71; brain, 72; futility of, 73; its ground of truth, 73; its difficulties, 73; self-subversive, 74; impossible, 78; considered, 234-236.
- Forces, correlation of, 66.
- Forces of nature, not equal to mind, 198.
- Foster, John, on existence of God, 59.
- Fraser, on decline of faith, 8.
- Freedom, necessary to morality, 103.
- Free will, divine, discussion of, 100-104.
- Future life, denied by pantheists, 40.
- Genera, permanent, 265.
- Genesis of atheism, 53.
- Geological argument, 61, 264.
- Germs, all similar, 76.
- Gladstone, on agnosticism, 13, 14.
- God: personality denied, vii; question of existence fundamental, ix; a standard for man, 10; knowledge of necessary to man, 23; in a sense agnostic, 31; how far knowable, 32; pantheistic conception of, 35-41; every thing, 41; immanence of, 41, 42; proper idea of, 42; pantheistic idea of, 43; distinct from universe, 44; cause of universe, 44; is in and supports universe, 44; present in all his works, 46, 47; agent presupposed by law, 47; power presupposed by law, 47; nature is God in action, 46; source of law, 47; absolute, 47; the sole cause of universe, 48; acting in nature, 49; in polytheism, 50, 51; existence denied, 54; Christian idea of, objected to, 54; atheists' attitude toward, 56, 57; Foster on existence of, 59; denial of



- unreasonable, 60; personal, demonstrable, 90; difficulties of theory, 90, 91; shown in universe, 92; inaction before creation, 97; esthetical and ethical nature implied, 98; holiness of, 99, 100; free and good, 101-103; omniscience, 103; his attributes, 103; theistic claim for, 110; apprehended by mind, 113; known by his manifestation, 113; known as men are known, 114; capable of being known, 117; definition of, 117-119; qualities of, 120; sole source of being, 121; Christian theory of, 121; in human consciousness, 133; not directly discerned by mind, 134; communicated by instruction, 135; first directly revealed in Eden, 135; by intuition, 136; meets man every-where, 138; indispensable to man, 142, 143; two ideas of, 154; may be found and known, 155; revealed in his works, 155, 156; in his word, 156; partial revelation of, 157; Raymond on idea of, 157, 158; unchanged by action, 290.
- Godhead, sense of, 140.
- Godwin, on atheism of French Revolution, 393.
- Goethe, on matter and mind, 62; on unbelief, 395.
- Goodness, necessarily choice, 104; of God discussed, 99-104.
- Haeckel, on materialism, 62; on creation, 65; on monism and dualism, 66.
- Hamilton, an agnostic, 28; on intuitive truths, 148; on causality, 168; on Biran's theory, 184; on first cause and God, 212; definition of mind, 227-230; conscious-subject, 227, 228; on God and first cause, 291.
- Harris's "Philosophical Basis of Theism," 162.
- Hegel's conception of God, 36, 38; absolute idea, 124.
- Henry, on pantheism, 37.
- Hobbes, on right, 398.
- Hodge, on pantheism, 35; on free will, 104; on nature of God, 120; on intuitive knowledge, 144; on intuitions, 148; on causality, 168, 169; on design, 360; on designer, 363-365; nature of man demands God, 373-375.
- Holiness of God, 100, 101.
- Honest doubt, respected, 5, 27.
- Hope, defensible, 9.
- Howe's "Living Temple," 161.
- Human age, force theory of, 71.
- Human nature, common, 128; varies in individuals, 129; satisfied by theistic theory, 245.
- Human thought, unity of, 128.
- Humanitarian power, 7.
- Hume, doctrine of cause, 29; father of modern agnosticism, 29, 84; on cause, 165; Wardlaw's reply, 165, 166; statement concerning first cause, 204; on mind, 229, 230; his idealism, 230.
- Huxley, on origin of life, 301; on its nature, 303, 304; on origin of protoplasm, 322, 323; on materialism, 324-326.
- Hybrids, infertile, 342.
- Hylozoic theory, revamped, 302.
- Hypotheses concerning first cause, 163.
- Idea, meaning of term, 123, 124; how originating, 124-133; of external objects, 130; not always correct, 131.
- Idea of God, origin of, 122-155; origin of ideas, 122-133; time of origin unknown, 135; implanted by instruction, 135; genesis in Eden, 135; an inheritance, 135; influence of, 137; inevitable to man, 142, 143; an intuition to some, 145; imperfect, 147; is it intuitive? 147-150; Raymond on, 158; necessity of, 159; the basis of theology, 159.
- Idealism, of Hume, 230; its imports, 231; of Berkeley, 253; Hume on, 253.
- Idealistic pantheism, 35.
- Ideas, classed by source, 133.
- Identity, of matter and mind, 62; of old and new materialism, 66.
- Identity, personal, proved by memory, 34.
- Ignorant unbelief, not noticed, 5, 6.
- Immanence of God, not pantheism, 41; the true doctrine, 44; erroneous view, 45.
- Immorality, implied in pantheism, 40.
- Implicates of evolution, 87.
- Implicates of necessity, 106-108.
- Implicates of theistic theory, 245-250; sole cause not caused but necessary, 246; perfections eternal, 246;

- time when only first cause existed, 246; sole cause once merely potential cause, 246; the uncaused cause sole ground of all things, 246, 247; sole cause personal, 247; universe not necessary but necessitated, 247; causal actor responsible, 247; causal agent and thing caused distinct, 247; causal agent immutable, 247, 248; causal agent under self-imposed conditions, 248; omniscience, 248; causational agency temporal and free, 249; purpose, 249; universe product of desire of the agent, 249; result of causational acts satisfactory to agent, 249; world-ground is personal, 249; summary of implicates, 249.
- Import of idea, 126, 129.
- Inaction before creation, 97.
- Incarnation, pantheistic view of, 39.
- Infancy, mental state of, 135, 136.
- Infinite, the, pantheistic views of, 37; term defined, 237.
- Infinite being, discussion of, Bowne, 284-290; Mansel, 290-295; Calderwood, 295, 296.
- Influence of theories, argument from, 390-431: theism alone rational, 390; consciousness explained by theism, 391; Starr King on God in nature, 392; theories reviewed, 393-431; results of pantheism and polytheism, 393; results of atheism, 393-433.
- Innate ideas, absurd, 135.
- Inquiry rife, 15.
- Instinct, religious, inborn, 51.
- Instruction, a source of the divine idea, 135.
- Intellectual atheism, 27, 28.
- Intelligence of Creator, Mansel's view, 93.
- Intelligent cause, proved by design, 359-372.
- Intelligent effect, denotes intelligent cause, 242.
- Intuition, contradicted by force theory, 75.
- Intuitions, 133.
- Intuitive knowledge, undoubted, 144; of God, 145; self-evidence, 145; strongest truths, 145.
- Jackson, on division of theistic argument, 25.
- Judaism, most ancient theism, 434.
- Kant, on ideas, 123; on being of God, 172; on design, 361.
- Knight's abandonment of argument from first cause, 212.
- Knowledge, imperfect, 125; origin of human, 181; result of experience, 183-185; facts of, 441, 442.
- Knowledge of God, intuitive, 146; imperfect, 147.
- Knowledge of religious truth progressive, 111.
- Lamarck, inventor of evolution theory, 191.
- Law, of nature the will of God, 46; Whewell on, 47.
- Life: from life, a new law, 77; origin of, 70; not accounted for by force theory, 76; on earth, recent, 264; how evolved, 267; Chadbourne on, 268, 269; not from physical force, 268, 269; mutations of, 270-279; transient, 270-274; organized, vegetable, 296; animal, 296, 297; variety, 297; evolution theory of, 298-326; origin not solely physical, 301; Huxley and Darwin on physical origin of life, 301; composed of matter, 303; inorganic and organic, 303; Beale on physical theory of, 305; materialistic view of origin, 314; theistic view of origin, 314; Huxley on, 315, 319; Tyndall on, 319, 320; Stebbing on, 320; not accounted for by science, 326; extra-material, 327; proclaims God, 327; from life only, 328; Darwin's theory, 329, 347; known facts of life, 348; Huxley's theory considered, 351, 352; the gift of God, 356.
- Locke, on ideas, 123; on mind in universe, 209.
- McCosh, on ideas, 123-126; on evolution, 312, 313.
- Man: a questioner, 17-28; mind his characteristic, 19; searches for things, 20; for truth, 20; self-conscious, 21; helpless and dependent, 21; asks whence, what, whither, 22; his quest of God necessary, 23; not an object of sense, 31; known by self-consciousness, 31; pantheistic view of, 38; a mode of God's existence, 38; in atomic theory, 71; his physical capacities, 373; spiritual capacities, 374.



- Manes, conception of God, 102.  
 Mankind, the incarnation of God, 39.  
 Mansel, an agnostic, 28; on intelligent Creator, 93; on absolute cause, 291-295.  
 Martineau, Harriet, 12.  
 Material complex not the universe, 78.  
 Material universe, foundation of, 104.  
 Materialism, extent and intent, 7-14; its view of mind, 62, 63; plausibility of, 63; errors of, 63, 64; absurdities of, 68; postulates of, 68; sole truth of, 73; theory of matter, 231.  
 Materialist, quandary of, 60, 61; last alternative of, 61; theories of, 61-110.  
 Materialistic evolution, 330, 331.  
 Materialistic pantheism, 35.  
 Materials of theism, 115.  
 Matter: the universal mother, 62; its eternity asserted, 65; eternity of, considered, 66, 67; indestructible, 206; not senseless, 209; accounts for nothing, 223; is accounted for by mind, 223, 224; not self-existent, 224; product of intelligence, 224; defined, 230-234; a real existence, 231; distinct from mind, 231; dependent on mind, 233; progressive states of, 270; future of, 272; origin of, Parker on, 412, 413.  
 Matter and mind, the materialistic view, 62-72.  
 Matter, motion, force, 30.  
 Maxims: of theistic theory, 240-244; concerning truth, 240, 241; concerning existence, 241; concerning causation, 241-244; concerning effect, 241, 242.  
 Maximus, on human apprehension of God, 142.  
 Mazzini, on unbelief, 395, 396.  
 Memory a disproof of agnostic theory, 34, 132.  
 Mental revelations of God, 138-142.  
 Michelet, quoted on Hegel, 38.  
 Mill, J. Stuart, on agnosticism, 9; an agnostic, 28; on evidences of a Creator, 113; on first cause, 192-208; misstatements, 192; causation concerns only changeable phenomena, 193; false conclusion, 194; force the first cause, 195; reputation, 195; conservation of force, 196, 197; on will, 197, 199; on mind, 200-203; summary, 203; Diman's reply, 205-213; position restated, 205-208.  
 Mind, pantheistic view of, 42, 43; dependent on God, 49; materialistic view of, 62, 63; unknown before advent of man, 71; origin of, 72; manifested in cosmos, 82; creates its own objects, 129; distinguishes between ideas and realities, 130; attitude toward connections, 150; environment of, 151; unprejudiced demands God, 152-154; explains universe, 187; Mill on, 196, 200-202; produced by non-mind, 202; eternal, suggested by creation, 225; defined, 227; by Hamilton, 227, 228; by Hume, 229; Diman's comment, 229; efficient cause of all, 242, 243; evinced by nature, 280; not a material product, 311, 312; in cosmos, 371.  
 Mind-force, evidence of, 174; its mode of action, 175; its products, 176; its first cause, 177-179.  
 Mohammedan theism, 434.  
 Momerie, on hope, 9; on agnosticism, 33; on materialism, 63; on self-consciousness, 229.  
 Monads, theory of, 219.  
 Monism, the basis of pantheism, 36; defined, 42, 64; Schleicher on, 64; theory of matter, 231.  
 Moral argument, 372-380; modification of design argument, 372; soul demands God, 372-375; moral sense, 375; prayer, 376, 377; dependence, 377-380; instinct of worship, 379; hope and trust, 379; dread, 379, 380.  
 Moral phenomena, indicate moral ground, 243.  
 Morality dependent on freedom, 103.  
 Motion, continuous, 206; law of, 301. [See Force.]  
 Müller, on mental revelations of God, 139.  
 Mutations of cosmic life, 270-279.  
 Mythology, 51; a groping toward God, 152.  
 Names of blatant unbelievers omitted, 5.  
 Natural selection, 338; probably true, 341.  
 Naturalistic notion of universe, 44.  
 Nature, reviewed by man, 21; pantheistic view of, 36; testimony to God, 120; limitations of, 373.  
 Nature of God, 120.  
 Nebular hypothesis, 280, 281; difficulties of, 281, 282.  
 Necessity, implicates of, 106-108; changes like the force producing

- them, 106; changes result from original potential force, 107; no mind exerted, 107; *ex nihilo nihil fit*, 108; freedom abolished, 108; moral obligation annulled, 108; idea of right and wrong excluded, 108; failure of, 109.
- Necessity not purpose, the basis of divine action, 36; Whedon on, 102; materialistic law of, 105; significance of term, 105; implicates of, 106-108.
- Need, moral sense of, 375.
- Negative character of atheism, 53, 54.
- Newman, on mind in cosmos, 370, 371.
- Nineteenth century, Christianity in, 6, 15.
- Nitzsch, on knowing God, 147.
- Non-existence of God, not demonstrable, 58, 59.
- Non-intelligence, in universe assumed, 109, 110.
- Norma* supplied by personal God, 10.
- Object, term defined, 238.
- Objections not fatal to theories, 75.
- Objections to force theory 73-110; suicidal, 74; unintelligence must equal intelligence, 75; failure to account for life, 76; impossible theory of universe, 77, 78; false ideas of cause, 79-110.
- Objects of perception, 130-133; external, 130, 131; the ego, 131; perceptions, 132; speculations, 132; intuitions, 133.
- Old and new theories of matter, motion, and force, 66.
- Ontological, term defined, 239.
- Order, Powell on, 368-370.
- Organific action, 71.
- Organism, how developed, 76.
- Organization, essential to life, 268, 269.
- Organized life, kinds of, 296.
- Organs, confused with mental faculties, 63.
- Origin of atheism, 54.
- Ought and duty, essential to mankind, 243.
- Paley's "Natural Theology," 161.
- Pantheism, 34-50: a form of atheism, 35; defined by Hodge, 35; by Wegscheider, 35; three forms of, 35; Spinoza's views, 36; Christlieb's comments, 36; doctrine of infinite, 37; system precludes creation, 37; denies God's personality, 37; man not an individual, 38; precludes idea of sin, 38; is self-deification, 39; deification of evil, 39; results of, 40; imperfect image of truth, 42; theistic materialism, 42; monism, 42; godless, 43; the God of, 43; Young on, 44-50; doctrine of eternal potentiality, 86; based on *petitio principii*; doctrine of good and evil, 102; hypotheses of, 163; results of, 393.
- Paradox, of changeable—unchangeable, 96.
- Parker, quoted, xi; on atheism, 411-431; denial of the divine, 411, 412; effect on matter, 412-416; effect on individuals, 416-421; as a theory of human life, 421-430; religion natural to man, 431.
- Partial character of divine revelation, 157.
- Paul, on polytheism, 52.
- Personal, term defined, 239.
- Personal agent, in universe, 90, 221, 222.
- Personal God, materialism denies, 8-15; question at issue, 17; pantheism denies, 37.
- Personality, not corporeality, 284; dependent on ability to know self, 284-286.
- Personality of God, 120, 437; his works, 438.
- Phenomenon, meaning of the term, 33; something exists beyond, 34.
- Philosophy based on intelligent God, 110.
- Physics, the ground of recent antitheistic assault, 205.
- "Physicus," on regret of unbelief, 11.
- Plan, of universe apparent, 115, 116; supposes mind, 310, 311.
- Plato on ideas, 123, 124.
- Plutarch on universal idea of God, 142.
- Polytheism, 50-52: insignificant, 50; outgrowth of ignorance and low morals, 51; its folly, 50; Paul's statement concerning, 52; defenseless, 52; a proof of true religion, 52; gropings for God, 152; results of, 393.
- Postulates, of materialism, 68; of theism, 115.
- Potentiality, doctrine of eternal, 86.
- Powell, Baden, on design, 368-370.
- Power, resides only in person, 46; an emanation of mind, 180; personal, 224; being, 305-307; implies



- choice, 308; supposes united purposes, 309.
- Powers, five in modern society, 7.
- Practical atheism, 55.
- Pre-existence of effect in thought, 242.
- Primitive forms of existence, 68.
- Progenitors and progeny, 258, 259.
- Progressive character of religious knowledge, 111.
- Proofs of divine existence, 250-450; perfection of, 250, 251; *a posteriori* argument, 251, 443; five forms of, 252; cosmological argument, 252-359; the teleological argument, 359-372; moral argument, 372-380; argument from universal belief, 380-390; argument from influence of theories, 390-431; summary, 431-443; *a priori* argument, 251, 446-450.
- Proposition, capable of proof, 243; rational but incapable of proof, 243; universal belief a test of truth, 243.
- Protoplasm, Huxley on, 303, 304, 315, 319; its resultants, 321; vegetable origin of, 322-325; source, 326; its life from God, 327; Thomson on, 327.
- Providence, physical, certain, 50.
- Purpose, evident in nature, 25.
- Pyrrhonists, absolute agnostics, 28.
- Quandary for materialist, 60.
- Quatrefages, on evolution, 299.
- Questioner, definition of man, 17.
- Questionings, human, seven points of, 19.
- Raymond, on the origin of idea of God, 157, 158.
- Reade, on personal God, 15.
- Reality, agnostic view of, 30.
- Refrigeration theory, 320.
- Religion, assailed by agnosticism, 13; desire for instinctive, 51; proved by polytheism, 52; universal, 142, 144.
- Renan, on universality of religion, 143.
- Resemblances, Darwin on, 340, 343-345; considered, 345, 346.
- Responsibility, human sense of, 375; of Creator, 446.
- Revelation, of man, 31; of God, 31; testimony to God, 121; of God, in works, 155, 156; in word, 156, 157; only partial, 157; Raymond on, 158.
- Rhythmic motions, 68.
- Richter, on Godless universe, 407.
- Robespierre, 394.
- Rosenkranz, on good and evil, 39.
- Rousseau, on first cause, 167, 168.
- Rudimental structure, 339, 344.
- Saisset, on indispensability of religion, 143.
- Satan, atheistic doctrine of, 39.
- Science, advance of, v; not responsible for alleged misdeeds, 13; and religion, 8; interest in, 15; agnostic view of, 30; maxims of modern, 206, 207; of an eternal source, 210.
- Scoffers, not recognized, 6.
- Self-consciousness, a distinguishing mark of man, 20; independent of not-self, 93; the knowledge of mental phenomena, 232.
- Self-deification, implied by pantheism, 39.
- Self-development, true evolution, 355.
- Self-existence of atoms, not proved, 79.
- Semblance of truth in agnosticism, 32.
- Semi-materialistic evolution, 330.
- Sensation, not source of all ideas, 126.
- Sensational school of thought, 126.
- Sensus numinis*, 140.
- Sequence, doctrine of, 84; Hume's theory of, 165; not cause, 170.
- Sidereal universe, design in, 362.
- Simplicity, not characteristic of intuitive truths, 148.
- Sin, precluded by pantheistic theory, 38; Spinoza's statement concerning, 39; Bauer on, 39; deified by pantheism, 39; origin of, 69; future of, 275; remarks on, 446.
- Skeptical atheism, 55.
- Smith, on decline of interest in theology, 7.
- Solar system, future of, 275.
- Sooner and later, meaningless in eternity, 95.
- Soul, existence denied by agnosticism, 33; proved by memory, 34; a form of God, 39; Büchner's doctrine of, 64; materialistic view of, 72; religious nature implies God, 139; real but non-material, 372; constitution of, 372; demands God, 373-375; implies a moral God, 376.
- Species, do not blend, 87; permanent, 265; number of, 296-297; no new, 342; real, 349.
- Spencer, Herbert, criticised by Gladstone, 14; leading agnostic, 28; his system, 29, 30.

- Spinoza, on pantheism, 36.  
 Spirit, in all things, 62.  
 Spiritual being, subverted by eternity of matter, 261.  
 Spiritual kingdom, revealed in Bible, 157.  
 Spiritual universe, foundation of, 104.  
 Spontaneous generation, 65, 66; unknown, 265, 298; Tyndall's admission, 298; McCosh on, 313, 314; Stebbing on, 320; unknown, 322, 327, 328.  
 Starr King, on impossibility of atheism, 392.  
 Strauss, the theology of, 9; on true incarnation, 39.  
 Struggle for existence, 337.  
 Sty, atheism of the, 27.  
 Subject, term defined, 228, 229, 238.  
 Substance, defined, 307.  
 Substance and form, Mill's distinction, 215, 216.  
 Substantiality of God, 120.  
 Suicidal quality of force, 75.  
 Summary of theistic argument, 431-443: problem restated, 431; answers considered, 431-434; atheistic answer, 431, 432; theistic answer, 433-443; effect of universal theism, 434-436; conclusion, 437-443.  
 Superstitions, 51.  
 Supreme Being, fate of, 394.  
 Survival of fittest, 338.  
 Tait, on material origin of life, 301.  
 Teleological argument, 359-371; explained, 359; design in universe, 260-362; in stars, 362; thought precedes design, 363-365; force theory absurd, 367, 368; Baden Powell on cosmic order, 368-370; Newman on mind in universe, 370, 371; the mind is God, 371.  
 Teleology, meaning of term, 359.  
 Theism: three forms of, 433, 434; monotheism, 435; effects of universal, 435-437; personal God, 437; all-powerful God, 440, 441.  
 Theistic argument, Jackson's division, 25; complexity, 113; exercises our highest faculties, 114; of first cause unanswerable, 222.  
 Theistic study, conditions of, 112.  
 Theistic theory: rational, 24; instinctive, 25; opposed by all parties, 27; the normal theory, 52; creation, 91; a thought agent, 92; not an eternally acting cause, 92 (see Definition of terms); defined by Flint, 110; origin of theory, 110; progressive knowledge of, 111; postulates of, 115; its materials, 115; cosmic cause intelligent, 115; in harmony with intellectual and moral nature of man, 116; undisputed qualities of, 116; obvious truths of, 117; God defined, 117-119; hypothesis of, 163; Mill on, 192-199; victories of, 188; new attacks, 189; terms of defined, 227-240; maxims of, 240-244; development of, 244-443; three suppositions concerning, 244; function in human thought, 244, 245; to explain phenomena, 244; to satisfy human nature, 245; implicates of, 245-250; postulates of, 245, 246; proof possible, 250, 251; final proofs of, 250-443; cosmological argument, 252-359; teleological argument, 359-372; moral argument, 372-380; argument from universal belief, 380-390; argument from influence of theories, 390-431; summary of argument, 431-443.  
 Theology, dependent on idea of God, 159.  
 Thiers, on necessity of religion, 142.  
 Things, not necessarily eternal, 92.  
 Thomson, Sir W., on dissipation of energy, 274; on origin of life, 327, 328; on design, 362.  
 Thomson's "Theism," 161.  
 Thought the support of man, 19; secretion of brain, 63, 72; Büchner on, 64; Bain on, 64; agent, existence of, 72; not material, 311; Huxley's assertion, 319; antedates matter, 322; expressed in universe, 370. [See also Mind.]  
 Tiedemann and De Serres, 349, 350.  
 Trendelenburg, on intelligence in design, 364.  
 Triangular controversy, 188.  
 Truth, eternal, x; the object of human questions, 20; in agnosticism, 31; in force theory, 78.  
 Truths, maxims concerning, 240, 241.  
 Tyndall on desire for God, 10; on matter, 61, 62; on thought and brain, 64; declaration, 209; on spontaneous generation, 298; on origin of life, 302, 319.  
 Ulrici, on proofs of theism, 112.  
 Ultimate, term defined, 239.  
 Unbegun factor, essential, 88.



- Unbegunness, not predicable of universe, 60.
- Unbelievers, desire God, 9-12.
- Unchanging factor, required by change, 97.
- Unconditioned, term defined, 237.
- Universal belief: argument from, 380-390; showy character of, 380; its worth, 380; proves probability only, 382; proof of divine existence, 383-390; sources of universality, 385-389; Adam's religious opportunities, 386, 387; God revealed in nature, 387, 388; witness of conscience, 388, 389; Flint on the worth of the argument, 390.
- Universality of belief no evidence of truth, 149.
- Universality of religion, 142-144.
- Universe [see also *Cosmos*], not God, 35; pantheistic view of, 40; true relations to God, 44, 45; grounded in God's will, 48; his presence necessary, 49; its existence undeniable, 60; must be accounted for, 60; beginning proved by geology, 61; eternal existence impossible, 61; creation of, 65; force theory, 65, 73; formed without intelligence, 67; intelligible, 67; how formed, 68; eternity of, 73; ground of eternal, 74; dependent, 77; not caused, 77; implies cause, 88; product of a free eternal being, 98; esthetic quality of, 98; ethical quality of, 98; based on personal will, 104; on intelligence, 109, 110; theistic theory of, 110; shows intelligent cause, 115, 116; modern scientific view of, 206; an eternal source, 210; mind or matter, 211; mind, 221, 222; theistic theory of, 226, 372; final cause of, 244; extent of, 438; in space, 438, 439; in time, 439, 440.
- Unknowable character, of God, 31; of man, 31.
- Van Oosterzee, on knowledge of God, 147.
- Variability of species, Darwin's law of, 337, 341.
- Vegetable and animal kingdoms distinct, 88.
- Vegetable and animal life, 296.
- Vegetable kingdom, factor of life, 323, 324; source of its original protoplasm, 326.
- "Vestiges of Creation," 191, 315.
- Volition, necessary to moral quality, 103; Mill on, 197, 199.
- Vulgar unbelief, not noticed, 5.
- Walker's "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation," 51.
- Wegscheider, definition of pantheism, 35.
- Whedon, on necessity, 102.
- Whewell, on law, 47; on origin of species, 348, 349.
- Wilberforce, on first cause, 169, 172.
- Will, divine, creates and supports universe, 48.
- Will, shown in action, 177, 178.
- Winchell, on creation, 264, 265; on cosmic mutations, 270-274.
- World-ground, personal, 284-323; objections to personality, 284-286; not an object of thought, 288.
- World-mind restless, 6, 15.
- Worship, craved by mankind, 50; instinct of, 379.
- Young, on God in universe, 45-50.
- Zoroaster, on good and evil, 102.

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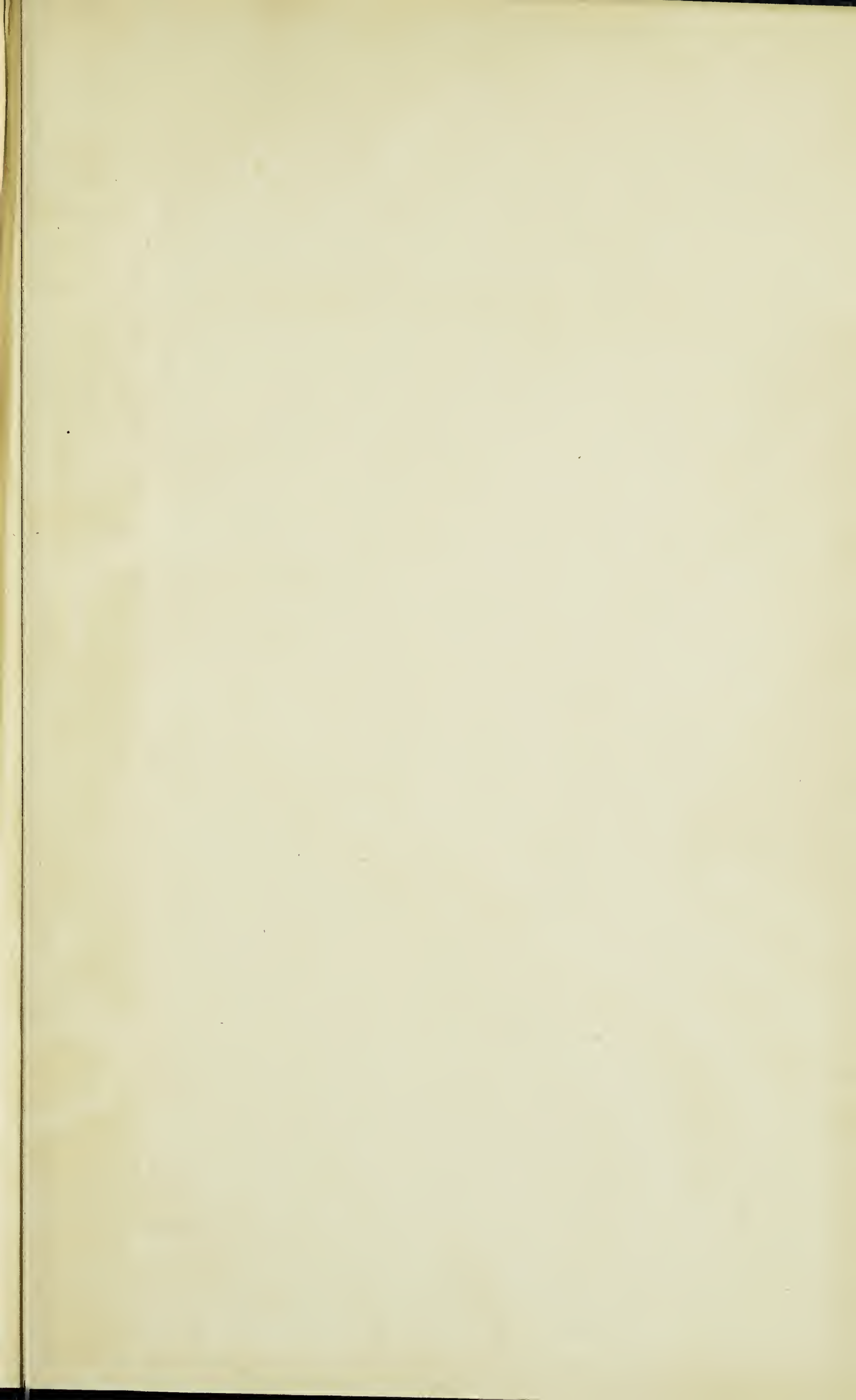




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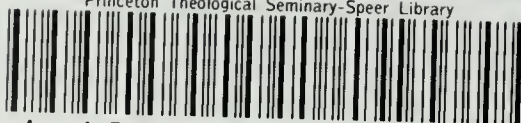
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